



## Democracy

**Michael Frayn** was born in London in 1933 and read Russian, French and Moral Sciences (Philosophy) at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He began his career as a journalist on the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Observer*. *Democracy* is the fourteenth of his plays, which include *Noises Off*, *Copenhagen* and *Wild Honey* (adapted from Chekhov's untitled play). Frayn has done a number of translations, mostly from the Russian. His novels include *Towards the End of the Morning* (in the USA, *Against Entropy*), *The Trick of It*, *A Landing on the Sun*, *Headlong* and *Spies*. Methuen has published two selections of his columns, *The Original Michael Frayn* and *The Additional Michael Frayn*. He is married to the biographer and critic Claire Tomalin.

*by the same author*

***Novels***

Headlong  
A Landing on the Sun  
Now You Know  
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Spies  
Sweet Dreams  
The Tin Men  
Towards the End of the Morning  
The Trick of It  
A Very Private Life

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The Sneeze  
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Uncle Vanya  
Wild Honey

**Democracy**

**Michael Frayn**

**Methuen Drama**

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## **Democracy**

*Democracy* first premiered at The Royal National Theatre, London on 9 September 2003 with the following cast:

<b>Günter Guillaume</b>	Conleth Hill
<b>Arno Kretschmann</b>	Steven Pacey
<b>Willy Brandt</b>	Roger Allam
<b>Horst Ehmke</b>	Jonathan Coy
<b>Reinhard Wilke</b>	Paul Gregory
<b>Ulrich Bauhaus</b>	Paul Broughton
<b>Herbert Wehner</b>	David Ryall
<b>Helmut Schmidt</b>	Glyn Grain
<b>Hans-Dietrich Genscher</b>	Nicholas Blane
<b>Günther Nollau</b>	Christopher Ettridge

*Director* Michael Blakemore

*Set Designer* Peter J Davison

*Costume Designer* Sue Wilmington

*Lighting Designer* Mark Henderson

*Sound Designer* Neil Alexander

#### **Characters (in order of speaking)**

**Günter Guillaume**  
**Arno Kretschmann**  
**Willy Brandt**  
**Horst Ehmke**  
**Reinhard Wilke**  
**Ulrich Bauhaus**  
**Herbert Wehner**  
**Helmut Schmidt**  
**Hans-Dietrich Genscher**  
**Günther Nollau**

#### **Setting**

A complex of levels and spaces; of desks and chairs; of files and papers; also of characters, who mostly remain around the periphery of the action when not actually involved in it, listening or unobtrusively involved in their work.

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## Act One

*Darkness. The expectant murmur of an audience, silenced by a handbell.*

**Voice** Ladies and gentlemen, I declare the result of the vote to be as follows. Those in favour: 251. Those against: 235.

*Applause, excitement. Lights up on Brandt.*

I therefore declare . . . I therefore declare, according to article 63 paragraph 2 of the Basic Law, that the proposed Member has received the votes of the majority of Members of the Bundestag. Herr Brandt, do you accept election as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany?

**Guillaume** (with Brandt and Kretschmann) And for a moment time seemed to hold its breath. The world was about to change in front of our eyes. A Chancellor from the left again, after nearly forty years!

**Kretschmann** Twelve years of Hider. Four years of military government. Twenty years of conservatism and Cold War. And now a hope at last of ending the long stalemate in Europe.

**Guillaume** Eleven twenty-two a.m., on the twenty-first of October, 1969 . . .

**Brandt** Yes, Herr President. I accept the election.

**Guillaume** Congratulations, tears. Willy Brandt had finally done it!

**Kretschmann** And you were there in the Bundestag to see it.

**Guillaume** An ordinary party worker from a humble district office in Frankfurt, up in Bonn for the day with a spectator's ticket. I shed a tear myself, I have to confess.

**Brandt** I am grateful for the confidence that has been reposed in me. I am also a little proud. Almost forty years have passed since any member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany has held this office. Years during which this great party of ours, founded by a poor turner in Leipzig exactly a century ago to bring strength and hope to the oppressed, was brutally crushed by the Nazi state; years during which so many of our members underwent unspeakable sufferings in prisons and concentration camps, and so many of them met a violent death; years during which, after the end of the horror, we played our part, in city after city, in the resurrection of our nation from degradation and destruction, and in the miracle of its rebirth as a stable and decent society. No one can ever belittle what has been achieved in this country by people in all parties and of all persuasions. But on this day the war that Hider waged, against the peoples of Europe and against so many of our own people, has finally been lost. We have a chance at last to create the Germany glimpsed by that ordinary Leipzig working-man a hundred years ago - a fatherland of love and justice.

**Kretschmann** (with Guillaume) The most extraordinary thing of all, though, is what's happened to you. No one back home can believe it.

**Guillaume** I can't quite believe it myself.

**Kretschmann** You never seriously expected to see Willy Brandt elected Chancellor. Not in your wildest dreams, though, can you have imagined that three weeks later they'd be sending for you to join him.

**Ehmke** (with Guillaume) Ehmke. Horst Ehmke. Willy's chief of staff. Running the Chancellor's office for him. Getting the whole enterprise up and running . . . (With Wilke and Bauhaus.) Thank you, Uli.

Very helpful. Over there, if you would, on the desk . . .

**Wilke** Not over there, if you please, Herr Bauhaus! Not on the desk!

**Ehmke** (*with Guillaume*) Good of you to come in at such short notice. Listen, we need some fresh blood in here. And not just academics like me who learnt their politics at university. - Over here, Uli! Don't take any notice of Reinhard. - What we need is some of the lads from the party. People who can talk to people. Our colleagues in Frankfurt say you're just the type for us. Done wonders down there. Work all the hours God made. And I'm told you have a lively appreciation of our young friends on the left. All the idealistic young folk who've just put us into power. I believe you would describe them as . . .

**Guillaume Well** . . .

**Ehmke** Arseholes?

**Guillaume** Arseholes.

**Ehmke** Right - job for you. - The key to the drinks cupboard, Uli. I'm going to put it in your safe hands. - Chancellor's office. Liaison with the trade unions. Start Jan. 1. Yes?

**Guillaume** Chancellor's office? Work there? You mean . . . with Willy?

**Ehmke** Department III. Economic, Financial, and Social Policy. Federal salary scale Ha. Accept?

**Guillaume** Yes, Herr Ehmke. I accept the appointment.

**Kretschmann** (*with Guillaume*) So, you and Willy! Under the same roof! Starting your new jobs together!

**Guillaume** I joined the party the year Willy became Governing Mayor of Berlin. Our stars are linked!

**Kretschmann** You can't help laughing, though. Willy Brandt talks about the achievements of West Germany. Twenty years it's taken West Germany just to get its first mildly leftish government. Not a word about us over there in East Germany. No mention of what *we've* done in those same twenty years. We've actually built the socialist society they used to dream about!

**Guillaume** Including the best foreign intelligence service the world has ever seen.

**Kretschmann** Mischa Wolf asked me to give you his personal congratulations. This is the biggest feather in his cap yet. Our own man in the Federal Chancellor's office!

**Guillaume** As long as Mischa's happy. That's all I want . . . And now here I am at work. A little room all to myself, up in the attics of the Palais Schaumburg. My first morning!

**Ehmke** (*with Guillaume*) Would you step into my office for a moment, Herr Guillaume? One or two things we need to talk about.

**Guillaume** - Personal welcome from the boss, even. Very charming.

**Ehmke** Security want some questions answered. You left East Germany thirteen years ago. They've gone very carefully through your career in the West.

**Guillaume** - Not a speech of welcome. A security vetting.

**Ehmke** Freelance photography . . . photocopy shop . . . party work - it all seems to check out. Lot of unanswered questions, though, about what you were doing in East Berlin before you left.

**Guillaume** - I wondered when it was coming. But out of the blue like that! Fright of my life. Somebody's obviously been telling tales. Two solid hours it goes on! Where? When? Who? In the end I have to lose my temper. - Herr Ehmke, escaping from East Germany means that you have to abandon everything you ever had in life. Your home, your friends, your family. For ever. And then you have to start life again from nothing, as nobody. You haven't had to do that, if I may say so. You can't begin to understand what it means. But now comes the bitterest part of all. You find you're going to spend the rest of your life in your new homeland under a black cloud of distrust and suspicion. Thirteen years I've been here! The last nine of them working night and day for this party! — Etcetera, etcetera. I could hear the choke in my voice. And in the end . . .

**Ehmke** Sorry. Have to put you through the hoops, though. I have actually been doing a bit of checking with your old boss in Frankfurt. Says he'd put his hand in the fire for you. So what are we wasting each other's time for, Günter? Let's get cracking!

**Kretschmann** (*with Guillaume*) Your initiation rite.

**Guillaume** And now of course he's my friend for life.

**Kretschmann** So there you are, in the Palais Schaumburg! What's it *like*? I'm blind, I'm deaf. You're my eyes, you're my ears. I've got to paint the picture for Mischa! You've got to paint it for me.

**Guillaume** Towers, casements. A nineteenth-century ironmaster's dream of the aristocratic life. Ghosts, of course. From the Kaiser's time, from the Nazis. From the Occupation. From Adenauer. And every now and then in my office I hear a tiny ticking in the roof timbers.

**Kretschmann** Deathwatch beetle. Symbolic, perhaps.

**Guillaume** And every now and then Willy hears faint sounds over *his* head. Footsteps. The scrape of a chair.

**Kretschmann** That's you?

**Guillaume** My office is directly above his.

**Kretschmann** His own weevil in the woodwork. Can you hear him?

**Guillaume** Not a sound.

**Kretschmann** Ear to the floor?

**Guillaume** Nothing. He works very quietly. And when I come downstairs . . .

**Wilke** (*with Guillaume*) Herr Guillaume.

**Guillaume** Günter! Please! Call me Günter!

**Wilke** Settled in up there, are you, Herr Guillaume?

**Guillaume** Snug as a bug, thank you, Reinhard. - Dr Reinhard Wilke. My immediate superior. The dragon guarding Willy's door. - Anything I can do for you, Reinhard? Filing? Copying? Watering the plants?

**Wilke** Thank you, Herr Guillaume. We do have secretaries.

**Guillaume** Extra pair of hands always available if you need them. No job too big or too small.

**Wilke** I'm sure you have plenty to do upstairs.

**Guillaume** — He's a little resistant to my charms. I'm not a prof or a doctor of anything, like all the others. -Just popping down to Party Headquarters. Anything you want me to take? Files? Papers?

**Wilke** We have messengers, Herr Guillaume.

**Guillaume** - I'll wear him down in the end.

**Kretschmann** - Take your time. Don't rush it. We've waited thirteen years. We can wait a few more weeks.

**Wilke** (*with Ehmke*) This Herr Guillaume of yours.

**Ehmke** Good man. Just the type we need.

**Wilke** Everyone in the office finds him a most surprising appointment.

**Ehmke** Reinhard, we need to broaden our horizons in here. You're a lawyer, I'm a professor. We've all got dust in our hearts!

**Wilke** But this wretched man has no professional training or experience of any sort whatsoever!

**Ehmke** He's a trained photographer.

**Wilke** So if we should need a souvenir of the staff outing . . .

**Ehmke** He's also got practical experience of management.

**Wilke** Management? Of what?

**Ehmke** Of a photocopying shop.

**Wilke** Horst, can we be serious for a moment?

**Ehmke** Times have changed, Reinhard. We have to embrace the whole of society. Photographers. Managers of copy-shops. Women! We have to find some women, Reinhard, and embrace *them*!

**Wilke** There's no shortage of secretarial staff. And as I understand it, Horst, they have been embraced by every government since the foundation of the Federal Republic.

**Guillaume** - And now - the big day!

**Kretschmann** — You met Willy?

**Guillaume** - I'd just come downstairs and put my helpful smiling face round the door . . . — Would you like me to slip out for a sandwich, Reinhard? Oh, hello, Horst. How are things on your side of the corridor? Sandwich for you?

**Wilke** Herr Guillaume, we must come to some understanding about access to this office . . .

**Guillaume** - And suddenly, before he could push me out again . . .

**Brandt** Capitalism stands on the brink of the abyss!

**Wilke** Herr Chancellor . . .

**Ehmke** Willy . . .

**Brandt** And what's it doing there? Looking down on the Communists. And this is . . . ?

**Ehmke** Herr Guillaume. Our contact with the unions.

**Brandt** Oh yes. The owner of the footsteps.

**Guillaume** - He knew who I was!

**Kretschmann** - He knows who everyone is. Politician's trick.

**Brandt** Another member of the Berlin Mafia, I believe. We Berliners have to stick together. They don't like us here in Bonn, Herr Guillaume.

**Guillaume** No. When the Wall went up in sixty-one no one in Bonn lifted a finger. The only one who fought for us was you. We're never going to forget that. Particularly those of us who come from the other side. Those of us who know what it's like over there. - Sorry. Live with the wolves howl with the wolves.

**Brandt** East Berliner goes to the Stasi. 'My parrot's escaped.' Stasi: 'We don't do Lost and Found - we're the political police.' 'Exactly. I want it put on record that I don't share the parrot's political views.'

**Guillaume** — He loves jokes. Particularly East German ones. — Why do the Stasi go round in threes? One who can read, one who can write . . .

**Brandt** . . . And one to keep an eye on the two intellectuals.

**Kretschmann** - You'll need fresher ones than that.

**Guillaume** - I'm out of touch! Rush me the latest!

**Brandt** My speech. Has it been typed?

**Wilke** I'll send a messenger across.

**Guillaume** *I'll* go! - And here I am! Fetching Willy's speech for him!

**Brandt** Guillaume?

**Ehmke** Günter Guillaume.

**Guillaume** - I think I've caught his eye!

**Brandt** He looks like the manager of a pornographic bookshop.

**Wilke** He was in fact the manager of a photocopying shop.

**Guillaume** Herr Chancellor . . .

**Brandt** Thank you. Run off a few copies, will you, Reinhard?

**Guillaume** I'll do it, Herr Chancellor.

**Brandt** Oh yes. Your speciality.

**Guillaume** Virtuoso of the Xerox machine. Confidentiality assured.

**Kretschmann** - So we've got our foot in the door. Well done. Mischa's very pleased.

**Brandt** I don't think I shall be able to stand very much of Herr Guillaume's company.

**Ehmke** Willy, it's not good for you to be surrounded by professors and politicians. You need to keep some contact with the grass roots. You need some ordinary human being around who can tell you what people are thinking.

**Brandt** Herr Guillaume, however, carries ordinariness a little too far. Find me someone else, will you, Horst?

**Kretschmann** (*with Guillaume*) Now, here's how we're going to work. We're living in a goldfish bowl in Bonn - and if one of the goldfish keeps vanishing from sight people are going to notice. So we'll carry on meeting like this, quite openly, in the restaurants and bars where everyone goes. Two old friends having a drink together, where everyone can see us. Nothing passing between us. All photographs or photocopies of documents you'll hand over to your wife. She'll be your courier.

**Guillaume** Poor Christel. She was the star of the show, not me!

**Kretschmann** She did Very well.

**Guillaume** A job in the Hesse State Chancellery in Wiesbaden! What more could anyone hope for?

**Kretschmann** One in the Federal Chancellery in Bonn.

**Guillaume** Pure blind chance, Arno! A gift from the gods!

**Kretschmann** Even the gods are working for Mischa.

**Guillaume** It was her life, you know.

**Kretschmann** Nevertheless, all written material to Christel. What Mischa really wants from you, though, is all the things that politicians and civil servants *don't* write down. The gossip. The background. The smell of things. The way they think. Who's in, who's out. Who's got their knife into whom. Copier and camera, certainly. But, above all, eyes and ears.

**Guillaume** Willy keeps saying he wants to open their working procedures to public scrutiny.

**Kretschmann** Here's how we can help him. And of course what we want to know about most of all is . . .

**Guillaume** The Eastern Policy.

**Kretschmann** The Eastern Policy. Any scrap of information that helps us judge his intentions towards the socialist block. Reconciliation, he says. Peace. But can we trust him? Is he really going to risk everything on such a gamble? 'Small steps', he says. How small? As small as the space he gives it in his speeches, slipped in below security and a lot of pious platitudes about 'daring more democracy'?

**Brandt** — It was the historical achievement of my predecessors in this office to establish an understanding between Germany and its former enemies in the West. This understanding remains the basis of our political life and the guarantee of our security. But the division of the world into two great power blocs has torn Europe apart. It has split our country and our capital, and undermined our relationship with the peoples to the East of us. Our reconciliation with them is, as we all know, especially difficult. And yet it is as essential for peace as our reconciliation with the West.

**Kretschmann** But will he really pay the price, when he comes right down to it? Is he really going to persuade people here to take their head out of the sand at last and recognise that we exist? You and me? The other Germany? Will he pay the final bill for the war: a quarter of Germany's lands lost to Poland and Russia - another quarter, us seceded and free. Half the nation, gone for ever!

**Brandt** - Those who have been separated from their families, those whose homeland has been taken, will never forget what they have lost, and we can only try to understand and respect their grief.

**Kretschmann** Twelve million people who have taken refuge here will never forgive him. Can any democratic politician simply write off a fifth of the population? He chooses his words so carefully. What do they mean?

**Brandt** - Even if it is true that two separate states exist in Germany they can never be foreign to each other. We are bound by our language and our history, by our glory and our woe. We have even now common tasks and common responsibilities: for the peace between ourselves and for peace in Europe. Our unity is gone, and there is no way back. Step by step we must seek to ease the pain of separation. We must draw a line under the evils of the past. This government, then, will venture to open direct negotiations with Moscow, with Warsaw, and with East Berlin . . .

**Kretschmann** But can we really trust him?

**Guillaume** You can't help trusting him. When you're there in the audience. You look up at him - and there he is looking straight back at you. You personally. Talking to you alone. One human being to

another.

**Brandt** - Dear friends, we must be at one with our neighbours. With all our neighbours - in the East just as much as in the West, within the German lands just as much as without. We must at last be reconciled.

**Kretschmann** And then when you remember him in his Berlin days. When you think of all his efforts to stop West Berlin being reunited with the East. When he trots out his ancient East German jokes . . . Has he really changed? Or has he simply noticed that the young people in West Germany are all suddenly turning against capitalism and militarism? That the world is going our way? What does he say in private? In the office. Talking to his own people.

**Brandt** (*with Ehmke, Wilke and Guillaume*) Can we trust them, though, Horst? When you look at their record. When you think of their total cynicism. What would people here say if they knew how East Germany tries to balance its trade deficit with us?

**Wilke** I believe we may be about to venture onto rather sensitive ground here. Herr Guillaume . . .

**Guillaume** Going, going!

**Ehmke** No, let's try it on him. Ordinary voter. Our man in the street. Günter, this is something our new friends over there in the East don't want you to know about, for some strange reason. They have to find something to export to us. What's their one successful industry? The manufacture of political prisoners. So that's what they sell us. They arrest as many as they need, and we buy them out. A thousand or so a year at 40,000 Deutschmarks a head. Oh, and they also charge us for letting people out to be reunited with their families. So what do you think, Günter? Can we trust these new friends of ours?

**Guillaume** - Yes? No? What do I say? Which one of me's going to answer?

**Kretschmann** - I leave it to you, Günter.

**Guillaume** - Leave it to which of me?

**Brandt** A difficult decision, evidently.

**Guillaume** Half of me wants to say one thing. Half of me wants to say another.

**Brandt** The position of the electorate as a whole on almost everything.

**Ehmke** I told you, Willy! Our man in the street!

**Guillaume** (*with Kretschmann*) Do we sell them political prisoners, though? Do we charge for family reunions?

**Kretschmann** Never mind about traitors and dissidents. What's worrying us now is the effect Willy's having on the rest of our people.

**Wilke** (*with Ehmke*) His visit to East Germany.

**Brandt** — The most moving day of my life.

**Wilke** It starts as soon as his special train crosses the border.

**Kretschmann** Suddenly there he is amongst us. The first West German leader ever to set foot on East German soil.

**Wilke** Suddenly there it is all around us. The other Germany. The Germany we've never recognised. The Germany that doesn't exist.

**Kretschmann** Our people have never seen anything like it before. A living, breathing West German leader!

**Wilke** It's never happened before! In every town and village along the line — people with their hands

outstretched towards him, people waving tablecloths and bedsheets. Armed police everywhere with orders to stop any demonstrations, but there's nothing they can do.

**Kretschmann** This is why we need to make up our minds about Willy so urgently. Because we can't hold the lid on all this much longer.

**Wilke** He gets to Erfurt for the summit meeting and they break through the police lines outside his hotel.

**Kretschmann** It's terrifying, Günter.

**Wilke** 'Willy! Willy!' they shout. 'Come to the window!'

**Kretschmann** There's only one person who can control them.

**Wilke** 'Willy! Willy!' they chant. 'The window!' He comes to the window . . .

**Kretschmann** He looks down on all those upturned faces.

**Wilke** What can he say that won't pour petrol onto the flames?

**Brandt** *gestures.*

**Wilke** Silence. One of the greatest speeches of his career. Not a word. Just that one little gesture. That one characteristic little gesture.

**Ehmke** I've seen him make it in Cabinet.

**Wilke** 'Calm down, calm down.'

**Ehmke** Willy the peacemaker.

**Wilke** A silent speech to a non-existent nation - and each person in the crowd feels he's being spoken to like a human being. Spoken to personally. One small gesture.

**Ehmke** 'Easy now! Easy does it!'

**Wilke** But everyone understands another meaning altogether.

**Ehmke** 'Patience, patience. The time will come.'

**Kretschmann** We're taking a huge risk here. Every word and gesture of Willy's raises the stakes. Every word and gesture of ours raises them again. He's going to sign treaties with Moscow, with Warsaw, with us. But can he get them through the Bundestag?

**Guillaume** Majority of twelve.

**Kretschmann** Twelve, yes. But only if the coalition holds together. It's all very well for Willy to cobble a government together by making a coalition with the Liberals, but how does he keep them in it?

**Wehner** (*with Brandt, Ehmke and Guillaume*) Only thirty of them in the House to start with - and half of them don't want the Eastern treaties at any price.

**Kretschmann** - This is the man who's got to make the coalition work?

**Guillaume** - Herbert Wehner. Willy's party leader in the Bundestag.

**Wehner** Three of them definitely going over. According to my private information. Three of them who find even desertion to the Christian Democrats preferable to the Eastern treaties.

**Kretschmann** - Three of them going? Only take another three and the treaties are dead in the water. The whole Eastern Policy will have vanished like the morning mist.

**Wehner** My sources tell me there's three more tender souls examining their consciences. Or the



size of the offers they've had.

**Kretschmann** - You're there? In the room with them?

**Guillaume** - They've stopped noticing me.

**Kretschmann** - So what does Willy say?

**Guillaume** - Nothing. He won't look at Uncle Herbert. Uncle Herbert won't look at him. Long silences while Uncle sucks his pipe and rolls his thick wet lower lip.

**Kretschmann** - 'Uncle Herbert.' They call Wehner that to his face?

**Guillaume** - They don't dare. One look at that face and you can't say anything. It's like eating a persimmon. Your mouth dries. He appears on television and all the cats in Germany run under the sofa.

**Wehner** Any fool could have seen this coming. We had a good stable coalition with the Christian Democrats.

**Ehmke** As junior partners! Tied to a party that totally rejects any accommodation with the East!

**Wehner** We were learning to govern. We're still learning. The party's not ready for office yet. But we pick up a few more votes, and what happens? Without consulting anyone our great captain cuts the tow and lashes us to the Liberals instead. To a leaking old tub of a party that's sinking in front of our eyes. We all knew this government wouldn't last for six months. So then what happens? Fresh elections? The Liberals drop one more point at the polls and they're out of the Bundestag altogether. Then we haven't got a coalition at all.

**Guillaume** - You're getting all this? The man who's responsible for keeping the coalition going - and he's against it.

**Ehmke** Herbert treats the party like a china teacup that's too precious ever to drink tea out of.

**Wehner** Coalitions come and go. Parties remain. A coalition has no roots and no loyalties. A party has members and funds, offices and officers, patronage and punishments. We know we can rely on the loyalty of Herr Guillaume here because we know he's devoted his life to the party - and we know he's going to go on devoting his life to it because his job depends on it. And if any of our lads down there in the parliamentary party begin examining their consciences I'll begin examining their records.

**Guillaume** - He's got files on all of them.

**Wehner** I'll get Karl after them. They usually see sense.

**Kretschmann** - Karl Tromsdorf?

**Guillaume** - His private security service.

**Kretschmann** - A highly reliable one. Learnt his trade with us. Old double agent.

**Wehner** We've told the world we're going to 'dare more democracy.' Whatever that means. Let me tell you what I've learnt from bitter experience about democracy. The more of it you dare, the tighter the grip you have to keep on it. Not something that Number One wants to know about. He likes to look down at the end of a hard day's work and see two clean hands folded on the desk in front of him. But if the plumbing needs fixing someone's got to put their hands down the toilet. Never for one moment do I forget what finished representative government in this country in the thirties. Unstable coalitions, collapsing one after another like soap bubbles. It could happen again. Parliamentary democracy in Germany is still in its infancy. Without two strong legs to stand on it will go down to its enemies. One of those legs, whether we like it or not, is the Christian Democratic Party. The other one is this party of ours. Slowly, slowly, in these last twenty years, we've persuaded the electors to trust us. And now we've put our future into the hands of a dwindling band of dilettantes over whom we have no control at all. The Liberals. The name alone makes my blood run cold.

**Kretschmann** - Old Communist himself, of course, Wehner. What would Willy's party do without us?

**Brandt** (*with Ehmke*) He's never forgiven me for becoming Chancellor. Too spiritually disfigured to show his own face, because every cat in Germany would be up the curtains, and hates anyone who isn't. The puppetmaster who's jealous of his own puppets. He wanted to keep a Christian Democrat in the Palais Schaumburg just to keep me out of it. An old Nazi! But then he knew how to pull his strings. What a pair. The old Communist pulling the strings. The old Nazi dancing on the end of them.

**Ehmke** Discipline, Willy. That's what Uncle craves. Someone to take the stick to him. That's what maddens him about you, Willy. You won't take the stick to him. And whatever you think about him, he's given his heart and soul to this party.

**Brandt** He gave his heart and soul to the Communist Party. He also gave all his comrades away to the Russian secret police.

**Ehmke** He's still tormented by it.

**Brandt** He's still as thick as thieves with his old mates in East Berlin.

**Ehmke** They've never forgiven him. They hate him.

**Brandt** They understand each other, though.

**Guillaume** - Do they?

**Kretschmann** - Of course.

**Ehmke** Anyway, he's a sentimental old thing, underneath it all. The night you were elected he threw his arms round you.

**Brandt** With all the grace of someone's maiden aunt making a drunken lunge at the postman.

**Ehmke** He travels all over Germany visiting sick and dying party members.

**Brandt** Sits on their beds praying over them. First he's a Communist, now he's a religious maniac.

**Ehmke** Just as well there's no one can hear what you're like when you're like this.

**Brandt** Only Herr Guillaume.

**Ehmke** Oh - still here, Günter?

**Brandt** How does Uncle know so precisely when people are dying, Herr Guillaume? Because, even if you're not dying when he arrives, after half-an-hour of his company you are.

**Ehmke** Come on, Willy. These things get back to him.

**Brandt** It's the only legal form of euthanasia.

**Kretschmann** - I think you were a little soft on Willy when you started this job. What did I tell you, though? Wehner's not the only one with another side to him.

**Guillaume** - No. Then there's Helmut.

**Schmidt** (*with Wehner*) I revere Willy. You know I do. I always have. He's my political idol. I'd put my hand in the fire for him.

**Kretschmann** - Helmut Schmidt. The heir to Willy's throne.

**Schmidt** But his attitude to you is frankly ridiculous. Our majority's fast approaching zero. He knows he can't keep the party together without you.

**Wehner** He also knows we can't get re-elected without him.

**Schmidt** We all need each other! It's we three who made this party electable! You and Willy and I. We dumped the Marxism. We fought and fought. The three of us together. The Three Musketeers of modern socialism! I was so proud to be one of them!

**Kretschmann** - Crown Prince Helmut. Waiting in the wings.

**Guillaume** - Arid waiting there for ever. He's only five years younger than Willy. Unless Willy gets run over by a tram he'll be too old to inherit. That's his tragedy. That's what makes him so edgy. That and his thyroid. He can't eat. He's living on ice-cream and Coca-cola.

**Kretschmann** - Ice-cream, Coca-cola, and the hope of a runaway tram.

**Schmidt** Willy always seems to be closeted with Horst Ehmke these days.

**Wehner** Herr Ehmke has a talent that some of the rest of us lack: he appreciates the great man's jokes.

**Schmidt** Most of them are about you, of course. You've heard the one about you and the Virgin Mary?

**Wehner** Yes. Thank you.

**Schmidt** Meanwhile I have to sit there in Cabinet each week and watch Willy let everything we fought for slip through his fingers. He won't exercise any control! Won't or can't. He claims to be interested in defence, but he won't give me any support in preserving the department's budget! He sits there saying nothing while Karl Schiller lectures us by the hour on economics. It's like being back in college. All those long silences of Willy's! All those compromises, all that indecision. Anything to avoid confrontation or conflict. (*With Brandt.*) So, Willy, yes or no? This draft or that draft? My proposal or Karl Schiller's proposal?

**Brandt** Let's talk about it. See if we can't find a solution that keeps everyone happy.

**Schmidt** You *can't* keep everyone happy, Willy! Not if you're running a government! We've got to come to a decision!

**Brandt** Thank you, Helmut. What do the rest of us feel . . . ?

**Wehner** (*with Schmidt*) The great peacemaker.

**Schmidt** And I honour him for it, like the rest of the world. If only he wouldn't do it in private as well. I'm not the most patient of men, I accept that. But to sit there in Cabinet and *know* that I have the answer to a problem - and then to watch Willy piddle it away - it's more than flesh and blood can bear!

**Wehner** And then suddenly, out of nowhere, some great gesture. Rushes us all into a new coalition without a word to any of us. All very fine, this wonderful spontaneity of his. But spontaneity's like democracy - it needs to be kept firmly under control . . . Can we help you, Herr Guillaume?

**Guillaume** Sorry. Just looking for something. Don't mind me.

**Schmidt** No, hand in the fire for him, it goes without saying. Hand in the fire.

**Kretschmann** - The old Communist and the old Wehrmacht officer. Both yearning for long-forgotten discipline.

**Guillaume** - Funny sort of discipline they practise, though. All they do is niggle away behind Willy's back.

**Wehner** (*with Ehmke and Guillaume*) The great man at home again last night, I gather, to all his fashionable friends. Camelot-on-the-Rhine, by all accounts.

**Ehmke** You should have been there.

**Wehner** Curious, isn't it. Scarcely have we got the grimy old cloth cap off this party's head and

wrenched the oily spanner out of its hands than the big chief's got us all into white tie and tails, drinking champagne out of actresses' slippers. No wonder they all love him. All the champagne-growers, at any rate. All the firms that rent out evening dress.

**Schmidt** (*with Wilke and Guillaume*) Berliners! Not one of them who knows the value of money! We give them three billion marks a year to keep the city going, so they chuck it around as if it came out of the taps. And now of course Willy's letting them take over the whole government. It's like some kind of infestation!

**Wilke** Even got them in here. Union business, Herr Guillaume?

**Guillaume** Party business.

**Wilke** Oh, yes, you've been promoted.

**Schmidt** Not that Willy's even a real Berliner. He was born in Lübeck! So of course he has to be more Berlinish than all the rest of them.

**Ehmke** (*with Brandt and Guillaume*) The problem with Uncle is very simple. He doesn't like you and you don't like him. The problem with Helmut is more complex. He loves you - and you don't love him back. He's like a sixth-former with a crush on the teacher. So he has to keep proving to her how much cleverer than her he is.

**Wehner** (*with Schmidt and Guillaume*) Horst Ehmke closeted away with Number One again.

**Schmidt** He's rapidly becoming Willy's Lord High Chamberlain. We're all going to end up taking our orders from him.

**Wehner** He's certainly stepped *in your* light.

**Ehmke** (*with Brandt and Guillaume*) Willy, what you need to do with both of them is to make them feel secure and appreciated. And the way to do that, Willy, if I may put it plainly, is to give them both the most colossal boot up the backside.

**Guillaume** - And then underneath it all, gnawing away like rats at the foundations of the whole enterprise - the new left.

**Genscher** (*with Brandt, Ehmke,, Nollau and Guillaume*) This is our Achilles heel. People look at the government and what do they see? A lot of long-haired radicals from the universities. People didn't like them when they were rampaging round the streets in '68, and they don't like them now.

**Guillaume** — Genscher. Minister of the Interior. He's the one who's got to control the demonstrations.

**Genscher** Every time people turn on the television - yet more violence by the left. They've held up a bank. They've murdered a judge.

**Ehmke** That's Baader-Meinhof! The Red Army Fraction! Nothing to do with our lot! Our lot wouldn't put their thumb on a bedbug!

**Genscher** The left's the left. As far as most people are concerned.

**Brandt** It was the young radicals who put us in office.

**Ehmke** We shove the old left off the raft before it finally sinks under their weight, and as soon as the new left see it's afloat they all scramble aboard and sink it again.

**Genscher** Then the next item on the news is the Chancellor in East Germany having some kind of love-in with the Communists.

**Ehmke** The Communists? What have the Communists got to do with the left?

**Genscher** The left's the left! In any case Herr Nollau tells me that East Berlin is giving active support to the terrorists.

**Nollau** We believe that the East German Ministry of State Security is offering them refuge and training facilities. We have evidence that it has been providing passage to the Fatah camps in Syria and South Yemen.

**Guillaume** - Günther Nollau. The head of West German Security . . . *Do we support the terrorists?*

**Kretschmann** — Another of our defectors, Herr Nollau. Inspired choice for the job. Wanted for murder when he did his bunk.

**Nollau** Nor, I may say, have the present negotiations with East Germany led to any abatement in the Ministry's campaign of espionage against us. We believe that East Berlin currently has something like a thousand agents active here.

**Kretschmann** - Keep very still, Günter!

**Guillaume** - They've forgotten about me. I'm the hatstand in the corner.

**Nollau** There are almost certainly several hundred agents operating in government offices as this very moment . . . I understood this to be a private meeting.

**Ehmke** Herr Guillaume. Works upstairs. One of us. Hates the left.

**Brandt** Anyway, we no doubt have similar arrangements over there. Why not? We all speak the same language. I see the whole of Germany, East and West, as one gigantic glass palace.

**Genscher** We must take security issues rather more seriously, Herr Chancellor. One more spy scandal and it could be the finish of this government.

**Kretschmann** (*with Guillaume*) It could, Günter, it could. Keep very, very still under all those hats and coat.

**Guillaume** In fact what finishes this government may well be Genscher.

**Kretschmann** Genscher?

**Guillaume** Liberal.

**Kretschmann** Perfectly tame one.

**Guillaume** Some of the more reactionary members of the Liberal Party don't think so. They want to make him party leader. The first thing he'd do would be to abandon Willy and go into coalition with the Christian Democrats.

**Wehner** (*with Nollau and Guillaume*) The Foreign Ministry. That's what his pay-off would be. That's what he's got his eye on, and he knows Willy's never going to let him near it. Trips to Paris and New York. Interviewed every time he steps off a plane. If he appears on television often enough he thinks one or two of the more observant voters might start to notice his existence.

**Guillaume** - Wehner and Nollau.

**Kretschmann** - Always been as thick as thieves. Both from Dresden, of course.

**Wehner** So, what's the word inside the Liberal Party? Is Herr Genscher taking over or isn't he?

**Nollau** I've no idea. I'm not a Liberal.

**Wehner** He's your Minister.

**Nollau** You want me to spy on my own Minister?

**Wehner** What's wrong with that? Equality before the law. Just as long as Willy doesn't know. Clean hands! And don't forget, you're not just an official of the government you're also a member of the party. You have a duty to uphold the party's interests. Anything you get hold of, on Genscher or anyone else - let me know. We have to stick together, you and I. Two simple Saxons trying to

survive in a world full of cocksure Bavarians and devious Rhinelanders. Two babes in the wood from Dresden, with a wolf from Berlin lurking behind every bush.

**Nollau** I'm very grateful for everything you've done for me . . .

**Wehner** So keep me informed.

**Nollau** I always do.

**Wehner** First. Yes?

**Kretschmann** (*with Guillaume*) West Germany, Günter! The Federal Republic! Not just one so-called democracy - eleven separate democracies tied up in a federation like ferrets in a bag! Eleven separate talking-shops all talking at the same time, with the Federal talking-shop in Bonn trying to make itself heard above the rest of them! Three political parties, in and out of bed with each other like drunken intellectuals, fifteen warring Cabinet Ministers in Bonn alone, and sixty million separate egos. All making deals with each other and breaking them. All looking round at every moment to see the expression on everyone else's face. All trying to guess which way everyone else will jump. All out for themselves, and all totally dependent on everyone else. Not one Germany. Sixty million separate Germanies. The tower of Babel! With not just one weevil in the rafters, but weevils in every timber in the house. We have our defects in the East, God knows we do. But at least we all speak with one single voice. We all sing the one same song. This is our strength. This is why we shall endure when this whole ramshackle structure finally comes tumbling down.

**Nollau** (*with Wehner*) One thing that might interest you . . .

**Guillaume** - Nollau to see Wehner this time. Something about Genscher?

**Kretschmann** - Leave it, Günter! Not twice running!

**Guillaume** - Hatstand. No one notices it.

**Kretschmann** - Hatstand keeps walking into the room and they will.

**Nollau** The security services are looking for a sleeper. Someone inside our own party. I thought you might wish to institute a few discreet inquiries of your own.

**Wehner** A sleeper? What do we know about him?

**Nollau** Not much. Planted at least a dozen years ago. That was when we intercepted a radio transmission to him. Ended with a personal message. Birthday greetings and congratulations on the arrival of his second son.

**Wehner** Two sons? That's all we know?

**Nollau** Also his name begins with G.

**Guillaume** - Don't worry, Arno! The sky's clear!

**Kretschmann** - A clear sky - that's just what the thunderbolt falls out of.

**Ehmke** (*with Guillaume*) Could I have a private word, please, Günter?

**Kretschmann** - I knew it!

**Guillaume** - Hold on. Keep calm.

**Ehmke** Party Conference next week in Saarbrücken. I'm setting up a temporary office for the Chancellor. You'll be running it. All right?

**Guillaume** Of course. Anything. Always happy.

**Ehmke** Going to be short-staffed, I'm afraid - you'll have to look after liaison with the security services. Sorry about that.

**Guillaume** No - I've always had a secret interest in security. - You see? Just tossing another hat on the poor old hatstand.

**Kretschmann** - Unbelievable. Only it's making me even more nervous.

**Ehmke** Consolation prize, though, Günter. Egon Bahr's going to be negotiating in Moscow. You can have the use of his official car and chauffeur.

**Kretschmann** (*with Guillaume*) Something's going to go wrong somewhere.

**Guillaume** Don't worry! Willy's got the first treaty signed.

**Kretschmann** Sill Poland to go before he gets to us.

**Guillaume** The Soviet one was the hard one. And it's the one that unlocks the door to all the others.

**Kretschmann** It's not ratified yet. His majority's down to four. And if we lost Willy for any reason. A tram . . . a bus . . . a thunderbolt . . . A scandal of some sort . . . His private life, for instance. All these women he has . . .

**Guillaume** Secretaries, journalists. Nothing serious these days. I've given you the list.

**Kretschmann** If it got out, though . . .

**Guillaume** Everyone knows!

**Kretschmann** But doesn't say.

**Guillaume** *We're* not going to mention it. Are we?

**Kretschmann** Not us. We're trying to keep him on his feet. If ever Willy dfo/lose his shine, though, Wehner would have him out like a bad tooth. Haifa chance, that's all he and Helmut need . . .

**Brandt** (*with Schmidt, Wilke, Ehmke, Guillaume and Bauhaus*) Uli!

**Bauhaus** Chief?

**Brandt** Bottles, glasses!

**Kretschmann** - Drinking. He hasn't started drinking again?

**Guillaume** - Not spirits this time. Only wine. They all do. By the bucket. Just wine, though, always wine. And always red, for some reason.

**Kretschmann** - The last traces of their socialism.

**Guillaume** - End of the working day they all get together with glasses in their hands. Relax. Forget their differences. Even Helmut. Even Wehner. And for an hour or two all our problems are behind us. A little circle of upturned faces, and after all that listening Willy talks at last.

**Brandt** 1945. Every city in Germany reduced to rubble. So what did we start rebuilding with? The rubble. It was all we had. Lines of women patiently sorting the usable bricks out one by one. Passing them from hand to hand, cleaning them, storing them . . . Who knows what buildings those bricks had been part of? The cellars of the local SS . . . the factories where the slave labourers suffered and died . . . They cleaned up the bricks as best they could, and out of them we built the plain straightforward cities we all live in today. It was the same with the people. Who were the people we rebuilt our shattered society with? Some of them were survivors of the camps and prisons. Some of them were exiles. But most of them had been the ordinary citizens of the Reich. They were our building materials. We had no other. And with those people we built the plain straightforward institutions of the society we're all part of. Now what confronts us? Two Germanies, broken apart like the old shattered masonry. This is the material out of which we have to build the world we're going to be living in tomorrow. This is the only material we possess - the two Germanies as they actually are. Riddled with doubts and suspicions on both sides. If the building we're creating is going to stay up, we have to make sure that this fragile stuff will bear the load we're placing upon it. We have

somehow to find ways for the doubtful and the fearful on both sides to accept what we're doing.

**Schmidt** Willy's dream. Life without conflict.

**Brandt** Conflict resolved.

**Schmidt** Irreconcilables reconciled.

**Brandt** Even the irreconcilables inside our own party.

**Ehmke** Now there's a really solemn thought.

**Brandt** One more solemn thought to carry with you into the night, gendemen, as you go back to your pining wives and children, if you can still remember where they live: under capitalism man is oppressed by man - under socialism it's the other way round . . . Clear the desk, will you, Uli. Work to be done.

**Guillaume** (to Bauhaus) I'll help you.

**Schmidt** Yes, where *do* our wives and children live . . . ?

**Brandt** East Berlin sends one of its functionaries to the West to report back on the death of capitalism. He goes to London, he goes to Paris, he goes to New York. Gets back to East Berlin. 'It's a beautiful death,' he says.

**Wilke** Didn't try Bonn, I notice . . .

**Wilke and Schmidt** go.

**Wehner** I wonder if Number One has ever asked Herr Bauhaus what he feels about being used as his buder and bottlewasher.

**Brandt** Uli?

**Ehmke** He's your bodyguard, Willy.

**Brandt** No one's going to shoot me at this time of night.

**Bauhaus** If there's nothing else, Chief . . .

**Brandt** Wife and children, Uli.

**Bauhaus** I'll be waiting with the car. (Goes.)

**Ehmke** Does he *have* a wife and children, Willy?

**Wehner** He probably can't remember any more.

**Ehmke** Or Günter. Does *he*? You don't know, do you, Willy. You've never talked to him.

**Brandt** I asked you to get rid of Herr Guillaume.

**Ehmke** Talk to him, Willy. He's devoted to you. All those upturned faces gazing at you adoringly from the hall — he's one of them. Talk to him. Find out what they're thinking down there.

**Brandt** He always reminds me of another Berlin speciality: meatballs cooked in fat. Very leaden and very greasy.

**Wehner** (to Guillaume) Wives and children, yes . . . Grabert. G. Grabert would fit the bill. Horst Grabert. He a family man? You know all about us, Herr Guillaume. Does Horst Grabert have any children?

**Guillaume** A boy and a girl. Why?

**Wehner** Idle curiosity. Like to keep abreast of my colleagues' personal lives. Gaus. How about Herr



Gaus?

**Guillaume** Günter Gaus? One daughter.

**Wehner** One daughter? Less trouble, perhaps, than a couple of sons . . . (*Goes.*)

**Ehmke** (*to Brandt*) Talk to him!

**Kretschmann** - So, now you're alone with him.

**Brandt** No wife to go home to, then, Herr Guillaume? No children?

**Guillaume** I'll wait till you've finished, thank you, Herr Chancellor. Make sure the spoons are locked up for the night.

**Brandt** Though I gather you still find time to make yourself agreeable to one or two of the secretaries.

**Guillaume** Oh . . . Just trying to be friendly . . .

**Brandt** The Frankfurt party?

**Guillaume** Me? Yes, I was.

**Brandt** Know this man? Standing for party office down there.

**Guillaume** Communist.

**Brandt** Thank you. Helpful to know . . .

**Guillaume** A wife, yes. I have a wife. You asked.

**Brandt** In the same line of business as yourself, I believe?

**Guillaume** She's transferred from Wiesbaden. We've found a flat in Bonn at last . . . You know there's something we've got in common, Herr Chancellor? You have a son called Peter - I have a son called Pierre. Fourteen. Somewhat different political views, though. Great lefty, your Peter, I know. Every time you open the newspaper - there he is, out on the streets again with his chums, protesting against his Dad's government. You must feel very . . . very proud of him . . . Whereas my Pierre is a tremendous fan of yours. Plastered 'Vote Willy' stickers all over the house.

**Brandt** In bed by now. You never see him.

**Guillaume** On Sundays. I try to make it up to him then. Our Sunday morning ritual - we jump in the car and drive out to the airport to fetch the papers. Wander round the airport together. Chat. I don't know what about. Watch the planes taking off. Imagine we're on one of them. Lifting away through the clouds. Up into the sunlight. Where are we going? No idea. Somewhere warm. Somewhere where the skies are blue and life is simple.

**Brandt** Midnight, and a rather different Herr Guillaume begins to emerge. Something of a romantic, this one.

**Guillaume** You know there's something you and I have got in common, Herr Chancellor?

**Brandt** So, every Sunday morning. You and Pierre.

**Guillaume** That's what I live for. Sunday mornings. Fetching the papers with Pierre.

**Kretschmann** - You're not falling for him, like all the others?

**Guillaume** - He listens! That's his trick. He listens to what other people say. Anyway, how can you see into someone's heart if you don't fall a little in love with them? And suddenly, out of nowhere, I hear my own voice speaking. - Herr Chancellor, you asked me once if you could trust them. The East Germans . . .

**Brandt** You were in two minds, I recall.

**Guillaume** - Midnight. No one but him and me, talking quietly together . . . - We have to trust each other, Herr Chancellor. There's no other way we can live.

**Brandt** Thank you.

**Guillaume** - Yes?

**Kretschmann** - If you got away with it.

**Guillaume** - I trusted him. And he trusts me. Then two days later . . . it's over.

**Kretschmann** - Over? What's over?

**Guillaume** - Everything! The whole project! The whole adventure!

**Ehmke** (*with Wilke and Guillaume*) We're out! We're done for! There's no way we can win! Motion of no confidence, and five of our own people are going to rat!

**Wilke** I believe Herr Wehner has turned one of them round again.

**Ehmke** We're still going to lose. Out goes Willy. Out go all of us. In comes Barzel. In come the Christian Democrats.

**Guillaume** Out go the Eastern treaties.

**Ehmke** It's a squalid little procedural swindle. There are people out on the streets right the way across Germany.

**Schmidt** (*with Wehner and Guillaume*) It was an accident waiting to happen. You set up a coalition like an egg balanced on the end of a billiard cue and sooner or later you have broken egg over the carpet. Not something that either of us would wish to remind Willy of now, but I have to say to you privately that this is precisely what you and I saw coming. I assume you've got one or two cards up your sleeve?

**Wehner** Everyone waits for kind Uncle Herbert to do one of his party tricks. Even Number One. Just so long as I do it by magic. Just so long as he doesn't have to see the hidden springs and levers.

**Guillaume** - Not for me to tell my masters what to do. But you said Mischa wanted me to use my political judgement, yes? My understanding of human psychology? I'll give it you in one word.

**Schmidt** Money?

**Guillaume** - Money.

**Wehner** Is that what they call the stuff?

**Guillaume** — Crisp crackling Deutschmarks.

**Schmidt** You'd only need to pay two or three of that lot to abstain.

**Guillaume** - Nearly two hundred and fifty of them to choose from.

**Kretschmann** - Günter, you're becoming a little cynical.

**Guillaume** - Why not, though? Mischa's done it before. What's wrong? We buy, we sell. Sell political prisoners buy politicians. What's the difference?

**Kretschmann** - Sixteen years of living in this place.

**Guillaume** - Do we sell political prisoners?

**Wehner** Clean hands. An interesting obsession for the man who claims to represent this country's manual workers.

**Ehmke** (*with Schmidt, Wehner, Wilke, Nollau, Genscher, Guillaume and Bauhaus*) I've started shredding the files. I want every file of ours out of the office by the time Barzel moves in.

**Wilke** He's already sent us the timetable. Fourteen hundred - result of the vote . . .

**Schmidt** And it's late, it's late. What's the trouble? What's the hold-up?

**Wilke** Fifteen hundred - he's appointed Chancellor; sixteen hundred — sworn in; seventeen hundred — moves into the Palais Schaumburg.

**Ehmke** (*to Guillaume*) Here, Günter - grab. Dynamite. Handle them with your eyes shut.

**Genscher** Here they come, here they come!

**Nollau** We've lost.

**Wehner** Wait.

**Nollau** I happen to know.

**Wehner** Wait, wait.

**Nollau** I have my sources . . .

**Schmidt** Look at Willy.

**Genscher** On the scaffold.

**Schmidt** As calm as a king . . .

**Ehmke** Come on, come on . . .

**Guillaume** They dragged people out of hospital!

**Genscher** Poor old Guttenberg looks at the point of death.

**Nollau** He is . . .

**Ehmke** I don't think I can bear this . . .

**Schmidt** Look, look! Sepp Woelker! He's signalling!

**Wilke** Two! Two! He's signalling two!

**Ehmke** They've done it!

**Nollau** I told you.

**Schmidt** By two votes!

**Wehner** Wait . . . wait . . .

**Schmidt** By two votes they've brought down the greatest leader this country ever had!

**Wilke** Look at Willy.

**Ehmke** He's *smiling* . . .

**Guillaume** (*with Kretschmann*) And the whole party went mad! Not lost by two - *won* by two! Those bastards were so sure they'd got it in the bag! They had it all planned! Sworn in at four! Into the Palais Schaumburg by five! *We* thought they'd won! Got half the files shredded! Then out comes Sepp Woelker. Two, two, he signals. Oh *no* . . . !

**Kretschmann** Well . . . congratulations.

**Guillaume** Never mind football! Try parliamentary democracy! Sorry. Howling with the wolves.

**Kretschmann** Howling with them? Or hunting with them?

**Guillaume** Hunting with them, eating with them. Laughing with them, crying with them. No other way, if you're half man and half wolf.

**Kretschmann** You won't forget the human half?

**Guillaume** Don't worry. I shall remain the perfect servant of two masters. Mischa and Willy. Willy and Mischa. My two great masters. Tell me one thing, though. To satisfy my curiosity. How much did it cost?

**Kretschmann** You're howling again, Günter.

**Guillaume** Sorry. As long as Mischa's happy. That's all I want in life.

**Kretschmann** And Willy.

**Guillaume** And Willy.

**Kretschmann** Back to work, then.

**Wilke** (*with Schmidt, Wehner and Guillaume*) The Chancellor? Indisposed, I'm afraid, Herr Guillaume.

**Schmidt** Another of his feverish colds.

**Wehner** As they are known technically.

**Schmidt** The doctor suspects that this one was brought on by the prospect of new elections.

**Wehner** The doctor's with him now.

**Wilke** Dr Ehmke.

**Schmidt** Administering the usual medicine.

**Wehner** Wielding the therapeutic corkscrew.

**Schmidt** So do please take a seat. We're all waiting urgently for signs of recovery, and if past experience is anything to go by we may have to wait for some considerable time.

**Guillaume** New elections?

**Schmidt** Who knows?

**Wehner** Ask Number One.

**Schmidt** Join the queue.

**Wilke** There *have* to be new elections. We've lost our majority in the House. We can't even pass the Budget.

**Guillaume** We'll pick up votes.

**Schmidt** The Liberals, however, will drop them. Will go below the five per cent mark. Will vanish altogether.

**Wehner** And this misbegotten coalition with them.

**Guillaume** So the Chancellor feels . . . ?

**Schmidt** 111, apparently, at the mere thought.

**Wehner** Someone ought to take him another bottle of medicine.

**Wilke** I suppose it should be me.

**Schmidt** I think our little friend is already on his way.

**Ehmke** (*with Brandt and Guillaume*) Come on, Willy. You're the Chancellor. Remember? So up you get and chance!

**Guillaume** Election candidate: If we win you'll get a new hospital — a new school — a new bridge over the river! Voice from the crowd: 'We haven't got a river.' Candidate: 'You'll *get* a river . . . !'

**Brandt** I can't face them, Horst. They look at me, and I see the perpetual question in their eyes. 'Why you? Why not me? Why you?'

**Ehmke** They know the answer. Because you're the man you are.

**Brandt** Whoever that is.

**Ehmke** The man who's done all the things you've done.

**Brandt** Done is done.

**Ehmke** The man who's going to do all the things you're going to do.

**Brandt** The man they hope I am, in spite of everything. The man they hope their hope will make me. The man they know they'll sooner or later find I'm not.

**Ehmke** Up you get, Willy.

**Brandt** All those expectant faces gazing up at me. I look down at them and I see always the same question, the same hope, the same dawning disappointment . . .

**Kretschmann** - Shocked?

**Guillaume** - Surprised. Never seen him in one of his depressions before.

**Kretschmann** - Disillusioned?

**Guillaume** - Disarmed.

**Brandt** And when I think of the jibes that come out at every election. The sneers about my illegitimacy. The taunts about being a traitor. What was I doing during the war, eating smorgasbord in Scandinavia while all the rest of them were trapped inside the charnel-house? I came back with clean hands! That's what they cannot bear.

**Ehmke** It's themselves they demean, Willy, not you.

**Brandt** I think the time has come for me to step down.

**Schmidt** (*with Wilke, Wehner and Guillaume*) Resigning?

**Guillaume** Talking about it.

**Wehner** Of course.

**Schmidt** Talking, though. Talking's a good sign.

**Wehner** I have some sympathy with him, I have to admit. They skinned *me* alive for my exile.

**Schmidt** You were a Communist. You got your hands dirty. You were part of the great train-wreck of German history like all the rest of us. Even our chirpy friend here from Berlin, no doubt. What, seventeen at the end of the war, Herr Guillaume?

**Guillaume** Eighteen.

**Schmidt** Hider Youth? Boy soldier?

**Guillaume** Of course. Anti-aircraft. Like you.

**Wehner** All of us on the train, except the great man himself.

**Schmidt** On the boat to Norway instead.

**Wehner** He leaves here each night and he turns back into a Norwegian. The German Chancellor - and he speaks Norwegian with his wife and children.

**Schmidt** He came back in 1945 wearing Norwegian uniform.

**Wehner** Those beloved Berliners of his scrabbling like pigs in the dirt for scraps, and where was the great man? Sitting at table with the Occupation forces, eating with commandeered silverware off commandeered china. His hands as clean as ever.

**Schmidt** This is Willy's great strength. He's not quite one of us. He doesn't quite understand what all the rest of us understand.

**Kretschmann** (*with Guillaume*) You look as if you could do with a spoonful or two of the red medicine yourself.

**Guillaume** They've got Karl Schiller out of Economics and Finance. Trapped him into resigning. Helmut's taken them both over.

**Kretschmann** One step closer to the throne.

**Guillaume** Also things are a little bleak at home.

**Kretschmann** Christel?

**Guillaume** Silences. Tears.

**Kretschmann** I'm so sorry.

**Guillaume** She seems to have been doing a little spying on her own account.

**Kretschmann** This is the secretaries?

**Guillaume** Etcetera.

**Kretschmann** You've told her it's purely professional?

**Guillaume** Etcetera, etcetera. It's the profession that's finished us. She gets homesick, Arno. Don't you ever feel a sudden longing to be over there again?

**Kretschmann** Of course.

**Guillaume** It comes at the oddest moments.

**Kretschmann** Those quiet grey streets. That blessed dullness.

**Guillaume** That simplicity.

**Kretschmann** We smuggled you back a couple of times.

**Guillaume** Like a returning ghost. Sworn to silence and invisibility. Eavesdropping on my own absence.

**Kretschmann** So West Germany has not proved to be the paradise that so many of our fellow-citizens think it is.

**Guillaume** She wants a divorce, Arno.

**Kretschmann** She can't have one. Mischa won't let her. We need you as a couple. And think about Pierre.

**Guillaume** I think about him all the time.

**Kretschmann** Your Sunday mornings at the airport together.

**Guillaume** Even that's just the cover for a letter drop.

**Kretschmann** Every coin has two faces.

**Guillaume** If I'm arrested . . .

**Kretschmann** Why should you be?

**Guillaume** It can't go on, Arno! Not for ever! And when they arrest me they'll arrest Christel.

**Kretschmann** Pierre would be looked after. I promise you.

**Guillaume** He's only fifteen. He wouldn't understand.

**Kretschmann** It would all be explained to him.

**Guillaume** I wake sometimes at night, and I feel a sick dread creeping through my body.

**Kretschmann** You and Willy. You're like some old couple who've been married for forty years. He goes down so you go down. He comes up again and . . .

**Ehmke (with Guillaume)** Günter! A little light bedtime reading!

**Guillaume** The railway timetable?

**Ehmke** Elections in November. Willy's going to be out campaigning in his special train.

**Guillaume** The train? It's his personal assistant who organises the train. Peter Reuschenbach.

**Ehmke** Standing for election. You'll have to take over.

**Guillaume** As Willy's . . . personal assistant?

**Ehmke** Bit of a killer, I'm afraid. Train, files, his dispatch-boxes, all incoming and outgoing correspondence — the whole works. Sorry, but *someone's* got to do it, and —there you are.

**Kretschmann** - Pinch me, will you?

**Guillaume (with Brandt)** - And now everything changes. For days at a time our home becomes this luxurious suite of softly rolling rooms. They're fitted out in rosewood and teak, in walnut and mahogany and cherry, and they once bore Reichsmarschall Goring around the Nazi empire. Now they're bringing Willy to ask the electors of Germany for their votes.

**Brandt** Dear friends, I say to you and I say to all our people: have the courage to show compassion.

**Guillaume** - Compassion. This is the party's election slogan. But on the hoardings everywhere he goes there's a simpler message: Willy!

**Brandt** Compassion for those nearest to you! Compassion, too, for those who are not so close!

**Guillaume** - 'Willy must stay Chancellor! Willy! Willy!' And always, in the shadows at Willy's side - Günter. The master of the timetables - the high priest of the holy book. The major-domo of our little travelling court. The personal valet. The bearer of the official dispatch-case.

**Brandt** Where's this?

**Guillaume** Berneburg, Chief. - 'Chief, you notice. Not 'Herr Chancellor'. Not on the train. Picked it up from Uli.

**Brandt** And we arrive Hildesheim . . . ?

**Guillaume** 1207. Seven minutes handshaking Town Hall — ten minutes discussion Mayor - three minutes Register Office spontaneous with bride and groom . . .

**Brandt** This is where I feel at home, Herr Guillaume. On the move. Fourteen years I spent in exile. Fourteen years of travelling for the cause and eluding the Nazis. Norway, Sweden. Spain, France. Then nearly twenty years going back and forth between Berlin and Bonn. Going round and round the world, telling everyone 'Berlin, Berlin'. Thirty or forty years of my life looking out of trains and planes at other lands and other lives.

**Guillaume** Speech Town Hall . . . Unemployment figures . . . Federal investment . . . Local anecdote . . .

**Brandt** I get so much more done on the train. No Uncle to suck his pipe at me. No Helmut to lecture me.

**Guillaume** - No Wilke to keep me away from Willy. No Ehmke to listen to his stories.

**Brandt** No wife. No family.

**Guillaume** - Just me. Getting his suit pressed. Laying it out with the matching shirt and tie. Taking the telexes back and forth to the wireless car.

**Brandt** These two are urgent. This one's confidential.

**Guillaume** I'll get it ciphered. Never know who's going to see these things in transit. - Every communication he has with the outside world - it passes through me. The knight errant and his loyal squire. The travelling magician and the assistant who knows all his tricks. Everything he sees - I see it, too.

**Brandt** All those other worlds! That little factory on the industrial estate. I could be working in there . . . And already it's gone . . . The bent old man in that village street, turning to glance up at the passing train . . . That could have been me instead of him . . . I could be in that silver Mercedes on the autobahn, vanishing into another distance altogether . . . We're stopping.

**Guillaume** Nordstemmen. Three minutes. A few words from the window. - And there they are, the good people of Nordstemmen.

**Brandt** Not a bad house.

**Guillaume** - The same sort of dutiful supporters we've seen waving and smiling in Northeim and Freden and Alfeld.

**Brandt** Dear friends! Have the courage to show compassion . . . !

**Guillaume** - Which of the women has he got his eye on this time? Is it that one at the front gazing up at him with very slightly parted lips? Or the one over there smiling that strange dark half-smile? Or both of them at once? Or all of them? Each one of them knows he's looking at her, and her alone . . .

**Brandt** I can see you, Herr Guillaume. Eyeing the girls.

**Guillaume** What is it about women, Chief?

**Brandt** The way they look at you . . . The way they look straight into your eyes and you look straight into theirs. The way you can't understand them. The way you can.

**Guillaume** The way they smile.

**Brandt** The way they look seriously at you. The way they make fun of you.

**Guillaume** The way they're not like men.

**Brandt** The way they are. The way they touch your hand. The way they touch your face. The softness of their touch on your skin. The softness of your own on theirs . . . All the different people you can be with them. All the different ways your life might go . . .

**Guillaume** - But already they're slipping away from us. All those sweet possibilities - vanishing for



ever . . . And when the evening comes . . .

**Brandt** Uli! Where are you?

**Bauhaus** Chief. (*Offers wine.*) Red or red?

**Guillaume** — He relaxes and he talks, the way he does at the end of the working day in Bonn. But now there's no Uncle Herbert, no Crown Prince Helmut, no faithful Ehmke. Only the journalists travelling with us. Only Uli. And sometimes — only me. Nobody. An upturned face like all the others.

**Brandt** I've been trying to remember a boy I used to know when I was growing up in Lübeck. Strange lad. Always rather solemn and serious. Not much fun in his life. Never quite enough to eat. No money. No friends. No father. Not much of a mother, for that matter. Brought up by his grandparents . . .

**Guillaume** And this boy was called Herbert Frahm?

**Brandt** Herbert Frahm. The name's as odd as everything else about him . . . Then one day, when he was nineteen years old, he vanished off the face of the earth. He set out from Lübeck to go to Dresden, and he never arrived. Well, this was 1933, and my celebrated predecessor with the little moustache had just taken office. People had a habit of vanishing then, in one way or another. Not a good time to be a member of a left-wing party, as Herbert Frahm was. Not a good time to be going to its annual conference. Only one bit of Herbert Frahm ever arrived in Dresden. His old student cap. But now it was perched on the head of a young man no one had ever seen or heard of before.

**Guillaume** Willy Brandt.

**Brandt** That's the strangest thing of all about Herbert Frahm. The fact that I was him, and he was me. What was it like, being him? I look back, and all that time has vanished behind a thick grey veil, like the old Lübeck waterfront in the fog on a winter morning. What became of him, when Willy Brandt took over his body and his student cap? Sometimes I catch a glimpse of him. Out of the window of the train. In a waiting crowd. A solemn boy, glancing up at me with a speculative look in his eye. What does he make of me? But then he turns, and goes away into some other life where I can never follow . . . You had a father, Herr Guillaume?

**Guillaume** Café pianist.

**Brandt** An honourable vocation.

**Guillaume** He was also a Nazi. And when he came back at the end of the war and found my mother with another man he jumped out of the window. It was a high window.

**Brandt** Two fatherless boys, wandering the world looking for . . . what are we looking for?

**Guillaume** I don't know, Chief. Women?

**Brandt** Günter! I'm shocked!

**Guillaume** - 'Günter', though! 'Günter'!

**Bauhaus** Sorry, Chief . . .

**Brandt** What is it, Uli?

**Bauhaus** One of the journalists is getting a bit impatient. Says you promised to do an interview before we get to Kassel.

**Brandt** Günter and I are talking. Tell him I'll do it tomorrow.

**Bauhaus** Her.

**Brandt** Her? Oh, yes. *Her*. Well . . . I suppose we have to keep the press happy.

**Guillaume** I'll be just the other side of the wall, Chief, if you need me.

**Brandt** I think I can manage a press briefing on my own, thank you, Günter. So she's . . . ?

**Bauhaus** In your compartment. I've taken the files off the bed.

**Brandt** And we arrive Kassel. . . ?

**Guillaume** In forty-five minutes. Witzgenhausen first, though.

**Brandt** Word from the window?

**Guillaume** And . . . jacket and tie, Chief!

**Brandt** Trousers?

**Guillaume** Certainly. (*With Bauhaus.*) Pretty, this one?

**Bauhaus** I wouldn't know.

**Guillaume** Eyes closed while you searched her?

**Bauhaus** You find all this very amusing.

**Guillaume** You did give her a full body-search?

**Bauhaus** I find it pretty distasteful.

**Guillaume** I sympathise. Terrible job.

**Bauhaus** I've got a wife and children.

**Guillaume** *He's* got a wife and children.

**Bauhaus** Oh, really?

**Guillaume** So for all we know she may be wired? May even be working for *them*?

**Bauhaus** Wouldn't put it past them.

**Guillaume** - *Not* one of ours, is she?

**Kretschmann** - Not my department, women. I'm pleased to say.

**Guillaume** Or Baader-Meinhof. Gun in her knickers. Put your ear to the wall, Uli!

**Bauhaus** Note the time in, note the time out. That's all I'm required to do.

**Guillaume** Just take the dispatch-case into my compartment for me, then. And, Uli . . . Any more young ladies who want a briefing - any hour of the day or night my compartment is next door to the Chiefs. — And on we go. Trip after trip. Week after week. Kiel, Karlsruhe . . . Bremen, Brunswick . . .

**Brandt** Dear friends. Have courage . . .

**Guillaume** - Everywhere, as the campaign goes on, the upturned faces become more radiant, the outstretched hands more clamorous to touch him. Willy passes among them like a Messiah. Smiling, smiling . . . Speaking, speaking . . .

**Brandt** The courage to show compassion . . .

**Guillaume** - And always, a few discreet paces behind him, his loyal servant, his faithful friend.

**Brandt** The courage to love your neighbour . . .

**Guillaume** - He asked Horst Ehmke to get rid of me. I found the memo. My personality was one of the things that depressed him, he said. I was hurt. Naturally. But I put it behind me. It was the depression speaking. I've forgotten all about it. So has Horst, by the look of it — because here we are, the Chief and I, together still, closer than ever.

**Brandt** The courage to find your own true self . . .

**Guillaume** - Willy and Günter. The noble hero and his comic servant. Don Quixote and his Sancho Panza. Over and over again he gazes down on those upturned faces. Over and over again he speaks, until his throat's raw.

**Brandt** Dear friends . . . dear friends . . .

**Guillaume** - Some of the older women weep, and press amulets and rosaries into his hands for him to bless. And as for the younger women . . .

**Bauhaus** (*with Guillaume*) Look at them out there! It's worse than a rock concert! How am I supposed to cope with that mob? Soon as he shows his face they're going to rush him.

**Guillaume** I'll help you, Uli. They won't get past us! Only one or two of the very prettiest ones, perhaps.

**Bauhaus** Supposing they *were* your daughters.

**Guillaume** We're public servants, Uli. We have to respect the voters' wishes.

**Kretschmann** — Don Quixote and Sancho Panza? Or Don Juan and Leporello?

**Guillaume** - You sound almost as sour as Uli.

**Kretschmann** - The free society, Günter. Enjoy it while you may.

**Guillaume** (*with Brandt*) - The softness of their skin. The light in their eyes. Or the warmth in their hearts. Something that got left behind in the mists of Lübeck all those years ago . . . No? No, very well. Just a thought. Forget it. He's a bit of a lad, that's all. We're two lads together. Two fellows on the loose. Two travelling salesmen away from their wives. But what a product we have to sell! Willy Brandt, the saviour of Europe, the greatest statesman in the world, with the Nobel Peace Prize to certify it. The Moscow treaty - signed and ratified. The Warsaw treaty signed and ratified. Yes, and in Warsaw he achieved immortality. He left a single image in the memory of the world that no one will ever forget . . .

**Ehmke** - Another of his unspoken speeches, and the greatest of them all.

**Guillaume** - He lays his official wreath at the monument to the murdered Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto. He steps back. And then . . .

**Schmidt** - Something else. He's going to do something else . . .

**Guillaume** - For a moment once again time seems to hold its breath. Once again the world is about to change in front of our eyes. And out of nowhere . . .

**Brandt** *kneels*.

**Guillaume** — For a moment I think, 'No, no, no! This time he's gone too far!' But I'm wrong, and he's right, because this is what the world remembers. That long moment when the German who has no cause to kneel went back down into the lowest depth of German history and knelt for all of us. The one unspoken word that said everything he longed to say. The one simple gesture that embodied everything he was loved for and everything he was loathed for.

**Wehner** - Something speaks in him, and he hears it.

**Schmidt** - Some small voice that speaks to him, and to none of the rest of us.

**Guillaume** - I wept, Arno.

**Brandt** *rises*.

**Kretschmann** - Perhaps at last the wounds are beginning to heal. Perhaps the irreconcilables are beginning to be reconciled.

**Guillaume** - Ten days before the election and they sign the treaty between the two Germanys. The keystone of the Eastern policy locked into place.

**Kretschmann** - Because you helped us to trust him.

**Guillaume** - And on election night, who is it who brings the good news to Willy? - (*with Brandt, Wehner, Schmidt, Ehmke, Genscher, Wilke, Nollau and Bauhaus.*) May I be the first to offer my congratulations, Chief? They're saying two hundred and seventy-one seats! They're saying a clear forty-six-seat majority!

**Wehner** Our best result ever!

**Genscher** Even the Liberals have picked up another eleven seats!

**Wehner** Right across the board! Swing voters in the middle. Catholic workers. Old ladies. The young.

**Genscher** Willy, we've had our differences, and we'll have more in future. But let's make no mistake about it. This is your victory.

**Schmidt** We planted the seed of this when we reformed this party ten years ago. You and Herbert and I. And now we harvest the golden fruit.

**Wehner** Here - a hug from your wicked Uncle.

**Wilke** Congratulations, Herr Chancellor. On behalf of everyone in the office.

**Nollau** And everyone in Federal security.

**Bauhaus** Also from your barman and bouncer.

**Guillaume** May I say, Chief, that working with you has been the best thing that ever happened to me, or ever will?

**Ehmke** Willy, your long exile is over at last.

**All** Speech! Speech!

**Wilke** He can't speak!

**Ehmke** He's spoken himself hoarse!

**Schmidt** Come on, Willy!

**Ehmke** Make the most of it, Willy! It's all downhill from now on!

**Brandt** Dear friends . . .

**Ehmke** He can still say *that!*

**All** Listen! Listen!

**Brandt** This is of course a victory for all of us here who have worked so hard together. But it is more than that. It is the German people's endorsement of the great reconciliation that we have begun. Never before, never before, has a German state lived in such harmony both with the free spirit of its citizens and with its neighbours.

**Guillaume** (*with Kretschmann*) And on into the night the celebration goes. Parliamentary democracy, Arno! One unending wild party! You're on your feet - you're on the floor! They've thrown you out - you've got back in! Now everyone's singing — now they're fighting. Now they're weeping - now they're laughing. Now someone's passed out behind the sofa - and it may be you.

**Kretschmann** Now someone certainly needs a strong black coffee.

**Guillaume** I'll be sober enough in the morning, never you fear. We'll all be sober.

**Wehner** (*with Schmidt*) So, what does the world look like in the cold grey light of day? I'll tell you what I see. Another four years of indecision. Another four years of compromise and drift. Another four years of Willy.

**Schmidt** Another four years of sudden unscheduled gestures. There'll be no holding him now. He'll be more intoxicated with success than he ever was on red wine or schnapps.

**Wehner** He needed his old friends before to control the party and hold the coalition together. Now he won't need us any more.

**Ehmke** (*with Schmidt and Wehner*) Listen, jobs in the new government. Who gets what. The usual horse-trading. You two gentlemen are going to have to stand in for Willy and preside over the negotiations.

**Wehner** Not another feverish cold?

**Ehmke** His throat. The doctors won't allow him to speak. On his way into hospital for tests. Here - letter from him. This is how he wants you to do it.

**Wehner** (*with Schmidt*) So, the game begins once more.

**Schmidt** Only now ministers are handed their instructions by the Lord High Chamberlain.

**Wehner** I shall put them carefully away in the inmost chamber of my briefcase.

**Schmidt** Better look first. See who's in, who's out.

**Kretschmann** - *You're* in, are you?

**Guillaume** - I'm waiting for Ehmke to tell me.

**Kretschmann** - He told Ehmke to get rid of you.

**Schmidt** So, what does Willy say?

**Wehner** Not much, I imagine, if he can't speak.

**Schmidt** In the letter. The letter Ehmke gave you.

**Wehner** Ehmke, yes . . . I know you've always felt he might benefit from a change of job himself.

**Schmidt** Broaden his experience. Give him a new perspective.

**Wehner** Which department do we feel would suit his talents best?

**Schmidt** The Post Office needs reorganising. He might find that an interesting challenge.

**Wehner** He knows a lot about carrying messages.

**Schmidt** Does Willy say anything about him in the letter?

**Wehner** What letter?

**Schmidt** You put it in your briefcase.

**Wehner** Oh, dear God, I've lost it. Can't find it for the life of me.

**Schmidt** So . . . Ehmke gets the Post Office, then?

**Kretschmann** - And what *does* Ehmke say?

**Guillaume** - Nothing. No Ehmke. - Have you seen him? Horst Ehmke?

**Wehner** Taking a little well-deserved holiday, perhaps. Oh, and Herr Guillaume. Your family. Are they well?

**Guillaume** In rude health, thank you.

**Wehner** Two sons, is it?

**Guillaume** Just one.

**Wehner** Of course. I'm glad to hear it.

**Kretschmann** - No Ehmke? What does that mean?

**Guillaume** - It means that Willy will have to look me in the eye and tell me himself. (*With Brandt.*) So what's been decided, Chief? Am I staying with you? — Not a word! He simply . . . hands me the dispatch-case. Another of his silent gestures! And what this one means is: 'Yes! On we go! To the bitter end! Together!'

*Darkness.*

## **Act Two**

**Guillaume** (*with Brandt and Kretschmann*) Nothing in this world turns out the way anyone expects. Nothing! I look at Willy sometimes and it breaks my heart. Everything he ever wanted he gets. The election. The treaties. Even the treaty with us that crowns the whole enterprise. And at once everything goes wrong. Everything! Inflation, rising prices, impossible wage demands, industrial chaos . . .

**Kretschmann** Democracy, Günter! Sixty million separate selves, rolling about the ship like loose cargo in a storm.

**Guillaume** They've hauled the monument into place. And now they've dropped the ropes there's nothing to keep them together. They're like tired children at the end of the holiday, with nothing left to do but squabble.

**Schmidt** (*with Wilke and Wehner*) Will someone kindly tell me how the Cabinet can discuss the Foreign Ministry's proposals for arms reduction when the Foreign Ministry still hasn't tabled them?

**Wilke** There seems to have been some slight confusion over the date . . .

**Schmidt** No doubt on the part of the same nameless person who arranged for the Chancellor to give a press conference on tax-reform the day before we decided what the policy was.

**Wehner** On the other hand we've launched a major new policy initiative. Or so I read in the press.

**Wilke** A leak, I'm afraid.

**Wehner** A pilgrimage to find the New Middle.

**Schmidt** The New Middle? What happened to the old one? Which is where Herbert and I have been struggling to keep this party for the last ten years.

**Wilke** I believe the idea originated with the Press Office. As I understand it, the intention is to provide some sort of counterpoise to the left.

**Wehner** We shouldn't need a counterpoise if Number One hadn't got them worked up by all his talk about daring more democracy.

**Schmidt** What is happening to this government? We casually launch into wild schemes without any proper consultation. We take on new commitments without any idea how they're going to be funded. When Horst Ehmke was running the Chancellor's office he used to co-ordinate this kind of thing.

**Wehner** The great man in his wisdom decided to dispense with Horst Ehmke's services.

**Schmidt** But Grabert's in charge here now! Why can't he do it?

**Wilke** Dr Grabert is away this week.

**Guillaume** In Siberia.

**Schmidt** *Siberia?*

**Wilke** On his way to Tokyo.

**Schmidt** A treaty with Japan?

**Wilke** A study of airline development.

**Guillaume** A freebie.

**Schmidt** Another Berliner, of course.

**Wehner** This government is falling apart in front of our eyes.

**Schmidt** Because Willy does nothing! Nothing, nothing, nothing!

**Guillaume** (*with Brandt and Kretschmann*) Nothing. It's true. I wait in the shadows at his back on provincial railway stations, willing him to speak, as if he were Pierre, five years old still and standing dumbstruck in the school nativity play. He gazes out over the expectant faces, and not a word. Not a gesture. Not a smile or a frown. His face is a mask. A mask with no one behind it. The people gaze at the effigy of their Chancellor. The effigy gazes back. His famous silence. But this time what it says is - nothing.

**Schmidt** (*with Wehner, Wilke, and Guillaume*) Where is he now? Not another feverish cold?

**Wehner** Or still brooding about his operation?

**Schmidt** Other people have medical problems. They manage not to let it affect their behaviour . . . What?

**Guillaume** I didn't speak.

**Schmidt** I'm perfectly prepared to subscribe to the general belief that Willy is God. What I find a little confusing, though, is not knowing which Person of the Trinity he's going to be from one moment to the next - God the Father or Christ crucified. Saving your presence, Herbert.

**Wehner** Our great leader's jibes have inured me to any insult to my beliefs.

**Schmidt** Most of them you never even heard when Horst Ehmke was around to control things.

**Ehmke** (*with Brandt*) We won. That was our great mistake, Willy. Defeat is the only thing that this party understands. Defeat is a testimony to high ideals. Defeat makes no demands. Victory means you have to *do* something - and *doing* something always involves dissent and compromise and making mistakes.

**Brandt** Even you seem to have abandoned me.

**Ehmke** I'm reorganising the Post Office. The job you gave me. You sacked me, if you remember, Willy.

**Brandt** I saw a boy watching me the other day. In the crowd on a station somewhere. Fifteen, sixteen. Very solemn and unsmiling. Some kind of cap on his head, like an old-fashioned student's cap. I couldn't take my eyes off him. He just gazed back at me. Gazed and gazed, and never a smile. He didn't like what he saw.

**Ehmke** Don't worry about the radicals.

**Brandt** I watched him. He watched me. Until we vanished from each other's sight again.

**Guillaume** Shall I send Uli out for a packet of cigarettes, Chief? - He's trying to give up smoking, on

top of everything else.

**Brandt** That operation, Horst . . .

**Ehmke** Operations are like everything else, Willy. They sometimes go wrong.

**Brandt** I thought I was going to die. I came round in the middle. I couldn't breathe . . . Solve everything, wouldn't it. Helmut would take over. Uncle would come back into the party leadership. Genscher would become Foreign Minister, and be kissed by the television lights and changed into a prince.

**Guillaume** - He nearly died again in Israel, in that helicopter on top of Masada. A sudden gust of wind, and it slides away like a fallen leaf. Stops at the very edge of the drop. Uli shouts 'Everybody out!' And the Chief just sits there, not moving, looking down into the Dead Sea valley four hundred metres below.

**Brandt** It's waiting so quietly and patiently, the earth down there. Smiling, arms outstretched, like a mother waiting for her child to run to her . . . I don't fear death. Only the agonising struggle to breathe until death comes, only the long fall . . . Only opening my eyes in some bleak hospital ward and finding Herbert Wehner praying over me.

**Guillaume** (with Kretschmann) Let me go, Arno. Let me go home. You don't need me any more. What more do you want to know?

**Kretschmann** Whether the treaties are going to be implemented. Whether Willy is going to survive long enough to make sure they are. You're closer to him than ever before, Günter! You practically live in his dispatch-case!

**Guillaume** I could give Christel back her life. I could explain to Pierre.

**Kretschmann** No more official cars, Günter! No more private train. No more upturned adoring faces. No more respectful attention from me at our little lunches. No more grateful appreciation from Misha. No more sweet quiet Sundays, cruising out to the airport with Pierre. Or is it Willy you're worrying about?

**Guillaume** If I resigned now he'd never find out about me. Let me go, Arno!

**Kretschmann** We need you, Günter! We need you more than ever. Not just to tell us whether he's going to survive but to help him to. Who else can he depend upon, now that Ehmke's gone? Who else works the hours that you work? Never condemns him for his faults? Never takes offence at his indifference, or hurt at his slights? This is why we need you - because *he* needs you. Howl with him, Günter. Help him.

**Wehner** (with Nollau) Guillaume?

**Nollau** The name keeps jumping out of the files at us. Three separate espionage cases where Herr Guillaume seems to have known the defendants. So we looked up his birthday. The first of February. The date of the birthday greetings for G. I'm sorry to add to your troubles, which I know are legion.

**Wehner** That's the complete case against him?

**Nollau** So far.

**Wehner** An initial and a date? And one son too many?

**Nollau** We need more evidence. But getting more evidence means watching him. Leaving him in place and watching him.

**Wehner** Make the big man look a bit small if it's true. He trusts him completely. Lets him see everything.

**Nollau** Lets him see what? He *is* only union liaison? He won't be handling anything too sensitive?



**Wehner** If they catch you hounding someone in Number One's office and you're wrong . . .

**Nollau** They'll crucify me. Sorry, Herbert.

**Wehner** You're in a difficult position, my friend.

**Nollau** So how do we play this? What do we tell Willy?

**Wehner** Nothing. We can't have him unsettled any further just at the moment. In any case he usually prefers to hear about problems after they've been solved.

**Nollau** We can't just leave him in the dark! We'll have to tell him *something*.

**Wehner** If we can't manage to be discreet we're going to find all kinds of nasty creatures coming out of the woodwork. Matters that we all hoped everyone had forgotten about.

**Nollau** Oh, not that nonsense again! You don't really believe I committed a murder?

**Wehner** Of course not.

**Nollau** It was a pure fabrication! You know that!

**Wehner** / know that.

**Nollau** I was completely cleared!

**Wehner** Let's keep you that way.

**Nollau** I'll have to tell Genscher, at any rate. My own Minister!

**Wehner** He'll immediately run bleating to Willy.

**Nollau** I'm sorry, but if I don't get Genscher's authorisation I'll be . . .

**Wehner** Crucified.

**Nollau** Crucified.

**Wehner** Question of how you put it. No need to go shouting Tire' at the top of your voice. Something more like a passing remark on the warmth of the weather. Then you're in the clear - and nobody panics.

**Nollau** They just get burnt to death.

**Wehner** Drawbacks to every policy.

**Nollau** And he *is* only union liaison . . .

**Wilke** (*with Brandt and Guillaume*) Herr Wehner? Gone to East Berlin?

**Brandt** Private summit. little chat with Honecker himself.

**Wilke** Prisoners and families?

**Brandt** Trying to get the trade going again.

**Guillaume** - Another unforeseen consequence of success. We normalise our relations — and it turns out that normal relations between two countries don't include buying and selling human beings.

**Brandt** I gather East Berlin's full of people sitting on their bags. They can't leave - they can't go back.

**Guillaume** - I don't know how much I've managed to find out about *this* country, but I've certainly found out a few things about my own.

**Wilke** When was this trip arranged, Herr Chancellor?

**Brandt** This afternoon, apparently. At an hour's notice. No unworthy suspicions, Reinhard! This is something he takes very seriously. The priest in him emerging from hiding once again.

**Wilke** With something of a rush.

**Brandt** He can scarcely have had time to pack the holy oil.

**Guillaume** - It is prisoners and families, is it, Arno?

**Kretschmann** - I've no idea.

**Brandt** Only another month, anyway, and we shall be on holiday. Out of all this mess. In the moist green depths of Norway, where remarkably little ever occurs.

**Guillaume** Nothing makes the Chancellor happier about being where he is than the prospect of being somewhere else.

**Brandt** No Uncle. No Helmut. No one at all except Uli to protect my privacy and Reinhard to intercept my messages.

**Wilke** I have a slight personal problem, Herr Chancellor. There is an unfortunate clash with the dates of my own family holiday.

**Guillaume** So who immediately steps forward to fill the breach?

**Wilke** Oh, I see . . . But *your* holiday, Herr Guillaume?

**Guillaume** Take it another time.

**Wilke** Your family, though . . .

**Guillaume** Glad to see the back of me! And the Chancellor and I are old travelling-companions.

**Brandt** Many a weary mile have I gone with Herr Guillaume at my side.

**Kretschmann** (*with Guillaume*) You see? We all need you! We all depend upon you!

**Guillaume** A whole month. Howling in the wilderness together.

**Kretschmann** Where should I be without you? Back in East Berlin, eating Bratwurst in the office canteen! Where would *Mischa* be? You're the jewel in his crown, Günter! Even if you never told us anything, simply having you there at God's right hand would still be the justification of Mischa's whole career!

**Brandt** (*with Genscher*) Guillaume? My little meatball?

**Genscher** The usual nonsense. Nollau didn't even think it was worth mentioning to you. I said, 'Look, we can't have your people crawling round the Chancellor's office without getting his authorisation.'

**Brandt** So what am I to do?

**Genscher** Nothing. Carry on exactly as before. Nollau says not to change anything by a hairsbreadth.

**Brandt** Same access to documents?

**Genscher** Exactly the same.

**Brandt** He's coming to Norway with me. He's going to have sole charge of all my communications with the outside world.

**Genscher** Excellent chance for Nollau's people to watch him at work.

**Brandt** I don't know where they can hide themselves. Middle of nowhere. Have to dress up as cows.

**Genscher** Keep an eye on him yourself, perhaps.

**Brandt** Provide a little entertainment. Nothing much else there to watch except the grass growing and Norwegian television.

**Genscher** His wife's also under observation, incidentally.

**Brandt** Whole family of spies!

**Genscher** I don't know about their two sons.

**Brandt** One son.

**Genscher** Two, according to my information.

**Brandt** One, according to Herr Guillaume.

**Genscher** Nollau's obviously got the wrong man. In any case even the East Germans are hardly likely to be spying on someone who's just inscribed their wretched little state on the map of Europe for them.

**Brandt** The merest possibility that Guillaume's not what he seems makes him infinitely more tolerable. (*With Guillaume.*) You have a moment, Herr Guillaume?

**Guillaume** Chief. - Something odd about the way he's looking at me. As if I were someone else.

**Brandt** Herr Guillaume, I've been having second thoughts about your kind offer to come to Norway with us.

**Guillaume** - Genscher was here! Genscher's told him something!

**Brandt** On reflection I feel it would be quite unforgivable of me to separate you from your family.

**Guillaume** - I feel the wave of alarm go through me. And then the hollow behind the wave. Disappointment. Sheer childish disappointment. The party's over! He's never going to take me anywhere with him again!

**Brandt** So why don't you bring them with you?

**Guillaume** Why don't I . . . ? I'm sorry . . . ?

**Brandt** Bring your wife! Christine, yes?

**Guillaume** Christel.

**Brandt** And your son. Pierre. Like my Peter. A great supporter of mine, I seem to remember. Rut and I will have one of our boys there. Not Peter - Matthias. Otherwise perfect holiday symmetry. Us two and our son. You two and yours.

**Guillaume** Chief, this is astonishingly kind . . .

**Brandt** Pack your raincoats, Herr Guillaume. And a good supply of fresh jokes.

**Kretschmann** - So you're happy again.

**Guillaume** - He suddenly looks at you as if he's seen you for the first time. It's like a ray of sunlight striking down from the clouds, shining on you and you alone out of all the world. At once all the cold greyness of the day dissolves. You can feel the warmth in your bones.

**Brandt** It is just the one boy?

**Guillaume** Just the one, Chief.

**Brandt** You should have persisted, Herr Guillaume. Two would have been even more fun.

**Guillaume** — And it turns out to be the best family holiday we've ever had. They put us up in a charming little green wooden house just downhill from the Chief, and we all have the time of our life, all six of us. - Real holiday for Christel, Chief, yattering away to Rut. No idea where those two boys are, though. Vanished into the woods together again.

**Brandt** Cops and robbers. Secret agents.

**Guillaume** Getting on like a house on fire, anyway.

**Brandt** Nice boy, your Pierre. You must be proud of him.

**Guillaume** Light of my life.

**Brandt** So different for them. Peace. Freedom.

**Guillaume** Fathers.

**Brandt** Who should we have turned out to be, if things had been different? You might have been standing here. I might have been standing there.

**Guillaume** Freedom, though. That's what's so relaxing about this place, Chief. You can leave all the doors unlocked and let the kids run wild.

**Brandt** You know why that is, Günter?

**Guillaume** Because the whole area's been sealed off by the local police.

**Brandt** Our own little police state to make you feel at home.

**Guillaume** - Time to think, time to talk. A little work, of course, at our respective jobs. Outgoing messages . . .

**Brandt** Negotiating points for Egon Bahr. Bit of a dog's breakfast. You'd better type them out before you send them.

**Guillaume** — Incoming telexes. Two copies of each. One for the Chief . . . — Personal message from Richard Nixon. — The other one for me. But we also spend hours out in the woods, like the boys, rambling around with Uli Bauhaus looking for mushrooms. (*With Bauhaus and Brandt.*) Makes a change to see you enjoying your work, Uli.

**Bauhaus** Makes a change to end up with some tangible results.

**Brandt** That's what I like about mushrooms, Uli. You pick them, you pickle them, you eat them; they stay picked, they stay pickled, they never try to eat you back. Spread them out on the table, then, and let's see what we've got. You're sloping off, are you, Günter? Not an initiate into the mycological mysteries?

**Guillaume** Too frightened of getting a wrong 'un.

**Brandt** We can always spot a wrong 'un, can't we, Uli.

**Guillaume** - So while the Chief and Uli sort their trophies I sort mine.

**Bauhaus** Some real beauties.

**Guillaume** - One or two quite attractive specimens.

**Brandt** Sparassis. Rather uncommon.

**Guillaume** - The British privately encouraging us to be nasty to the Americans.

**Brandt** Wonderful sweet fragrance.

**Guillaume** - Charmingly indiscreet tone.

**Bauhaus** Look at this whopper!

**Guillaume** - Oh, and a real corker here!

**Brandt** Parasol. *Lepiota procera*.

**Guillaume** - The French Foreign Minister in person, being even nastier about the Americans.

**Brandt** Ask Rut to fry it in butter with a little chopped onion and chervil.

**Guillaume** - Mischa should be able to cook up something rather tasty with this . . . I even get on well with Uli. In fact I get on well with the entire security team. Christel and I give a little drinks party for them, and Pierre takes snaps of them all. Then in the evening we stroll across and have drinks on the verandah with Willy and Rut.

**Brandt** Fetch us out another couple of bottles, Uli. Then we shan't have to trouble you again.

**Guillaume** - It's like one of those sessions in the office in the old days. Except there's no Uncle and no Helmut. Just Rut and Christel and the boys. Uli, waiting with gun in holster and corkscrew in hand. The Chief and me. Also one or two old friends who emerge from Willy's Norwegian past as the long northern twilight wears on.

**Brandt** Willy Brandt isn't the only person I was when I was here in Norway in the thirties. I was also Willy Flamme. I was Karl Martin. I was Felix Franke. Each of them writing articles for a different paper, each of them with a slightly different viewpoint. You must learn English, Günter, and read Walt Whitman. 'Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself. I am large, I contain multitudes.'

**Guillaume** Your first experience of presiding over a Cabinet, Chief.

**Brandt** I must have been rather better at it then. I don't recall any major splits or betrayals. What about you? Being our good familiar Günter Guillaume can't have exhausted all your possibilities.

**Guillaume** Only name I've ever had.

**Brandt** People kept taking me for a spy. Not something anyone's ever accused you of?

**Guillaume** Being a spy? No.

**Brandt** The Norwegians thought I was spying for the Finns. The Swedes arrested me for spying for the Russians.

**Guillaume** Can't see you as a spy.

**Brandt** No?

**Guillaume** Too noticeable. Too, if I may say so, Chief, secretive.

**Brandt** I knew all the tricks of the trade. Learnt them when I was on the run from the Gestapo. Suitcases with false bottoms. Invisible ink.

**Guillaume** Invisible ink? You have actually written messages in invisible ink?

**Brandt** Useful training. It's what politicians do all the time. No, I could have been a spy, Günter. Might be one, for all you know. Might be spying now.

**Guillaume** - And for a moment I wonder . . .

**Kretschmann** — Wonder what?

**Guillaume** - Nothing. Ridiculous. The Chief could no more spy than fly.

**Brandt** All right, it's 1936. Yes? For six months I'm back in Nazi Germany. In Berlin, working underground for the party. Who am I? Willy Brandt? Obviously not. Willy Flamme - Karl Martin - Felix

Franke? No - I'm not even a German . . . May I introduce myself? My name is Gunnar Gaasland. I was born and brought up in Oslo, as I'm afraid is only too clear from my accent! A very exciting time to be in Berlin, and to see all the wonderful new political developments here!

**Guillaume** I believe you, Chief. Gunnar Gaasland, from Oslo!

**Brandt** And always, always, at the back of your mind, the fear that you'll be taken by surprise. Suddenly - another Norwegian. What will your Norwegian sound like to a Norwegian? —*Vi må serge for å motes en gang. Det ville vosre en lettelse å snakke norsk igjen noen timer . . .*! - Will you pass or won't you? What if he's an old friend of Gunnar Gaasland's? Or what if you find yourself face to face with an old friend of Willy Brandt's? Or you're sitting talking with someone. Someone you've got to know quite well, perhaps. Feeling at ease with them. Feeling that everything's going well. And then you realise he's looking at you in a slightly odd way. At once you think . . .

**Guillaume** 'He knows!'

**Brandt** 'He knows . . . He knows . . .' It takes courage to live like that.

**Guillaume** I can imagine.

**Brandt** Courage and endurance.

**Guillaume** Yes.

**Brandt** More courage and endurance than I could muster. I fled, Günter. I fled. So perhaps you're right I'm not a spy. Just a suitcase with a series of false bottoms. Willy Flamme, Karl Martin . . . Felix Franke, Gunnar Gaasland . . . And somewhere among them the most secret compartment of them all. The one that you can remember finding once, and that you can never quite find again.

**Guillaume** The one called Herbert Frahm.

**Brandt** Or is it someone else altogether? Another little boy. A rather cheerful, ordinary one, not solemn or serious at all. Someone rather like your Pierre. The little boy that Herbert Frahm might have been if his father had brought him up and told him stories and played with him. Or even acknowledged his existence and given him his name. Herbert Moller. The boy I might have been, and never was.

**Guillaume** - We sit there through the long Norwegian evenings, and in that unfamiliar northern light everything begins to seem strange and uncertain. I've become transparent to him, and he's playing with me, just as I am with him. Or is it only the possibility he's playing with? Or is that what I'm doing? Is it him I'm seeing in the half-light, or is it a reflection of myself?

**Kretschmann** - You're still handling the telexes?

**Guillaume** - Yes.

**Kretschmann** — And not being watched?

**Guillaume** - No.

**Kretschmann** - Certain?

**Guillaume** - Certain. Then one night he asks me the same question he asked me before.

**Brandt** And you still think I can trust them?

**Guillaume** - It's almost dark. I can't see the expression on his face. - I hope they haven't been listening in to some of the things you've been telling me, Chief, or they might start to have a few doubts about *you* . . .

**Kretschmann** - He can't see *your* face.

**Guillaume** - No. But in the end the time comes to leave, and I have to show you the collected fruits of all my labours. So I simply get two of our dispatch-cases . . .

**Bauhaus** These two?

**Guillaume** Thank you, Uli. - I pack up all my copies of the incoming and outgoing messages in *that* one, and put it in the boot of my car. *This* one I fill up with the little souvenirs that the Chief hands out on our travels. Then . . . -Uli!

**Bauhaus** If you're going to ask me to carry something back to Bonn for you . . .

**Guillaume** Classified documents, Uli.

**Bauhaus** I've got all the Chiefs bags already. I've got five jars of pickled mushrooms.

**Guillaume** Uli, you're a trained security officer.

**Bauhaus** Yes. Not a porter.

**Guillaume** You're flying. I'm driving.

**Bauhaus** Certainly not *your* porter.

**Guillaume** Uli, if anything should happen to these papers while they were in the boot of my car . . .

**Bauhaus** It wouldn't be *my* responsibility.

**Guillaume** I'll tuck it under your arm, look. Now, don't let that box out of your sight, Uli. Not for an instant. Thanks, Uli. You're a pal.

**Bauhaus** I can't even draw my gun!

**Guillaume** If you need to draw your gun, Uli - drop the mushrooms. - And my fears are fully justified. We stop for the night at a hotel in Sweden, and I lock the box of souvenirs in our room while Christel and I go dancing. I have a strong suspicion when we get back that somebody has let themselves in and photographed the entire collection.

**Kretschmann** - Worked like a charm. Thank you.

**Guillaume** — So now we're back in the Palais Schaumburg. And even if any suspicions crossed the Chiefs mind up there in Norway they've soon vanished into the autumn mist, because everything's even worse than it was before. There are wildcat strikes in the metalworking industry. The dustmen aren't emptying the dustbins.

**Kretschmann** - Sixty million Germanys!

**Guillaume** - Helmut's raging away.

**Schmidt** Someone's got to stand up to these people! Someone's got to *do* something! Make some decisions! Give this government a sense of purpose and direction!

**Guillaume** - And where's Uncle off to?

**Ehmke** (*with Wilke and Guillaume*) Can you believe he actually said it? Even Herbert Wehner?

**Wilke** 'What the present German government lacks is a head.'

**Ehmke** At a press-conference! In *Moscow*, of all places! We've only just established normal relations! The entire world waiting to hear what he's going to say!

**Wilke** 'The Chancellor's asleep on his feet. He's lost in a world of his own . . . Quite frankly I have never taken this government seriously as a government . . .'

**Ehmke** Who put him up to it, though? You know the Russians are telling us in private that he's having more secret meetings with his friends in East Berlin?

**Wilke** What East Berlin is telling us in private is that the Russians are lying.

**Ehmke** Two old friends make a new friend - and at once they get jealous of each other. Another unforeseen consequence of our success. Life's such a tangle, Reinhard! Everyone looking at everyone else. Everyone seeing something different. Everyone trying to guess what everyone else is seeing. It's such an endless shifting unreliable indecipherable unanalysable *mess*!

**Wilke** I think that what Herr Wehner is saying is comparatively simple. 'Sack me. Or sack yourself.'

**Ehmke** And this time Willy will have to do it. He'll have to nerve himself to pick up the pistol and pull the trigger. It's either Willy or Uncle. They can't both survive.

**Wehner** (*with Ehmke, Wilke and Guillaume*) Banished! Exiled! Shut out from the sunshine of our great leader's smile!

**Ehmke** Sacked?

**Wehner** Sacked? Dear God, no. Made to sit in the corner at lunch. Firmness tempered with mercy, as always. The great peacemaker at work once again. Hands as unspotted as ever.

**Ehmke** (*with Wilke and Guillaume*) So now of course it's Helmut's turn again to chisel away at him.

**Schmidt** (*with Brandt*) 'No.' That's the word, Willy. You must learn to say it! 'No . . . no . . . no . . . ' They want a fifteen per cent pay rise? No. 'No' meaning no.

**Brandt** 'No' will mean no buses or trains, of course. No post. No hospitals.

**Schmidt** It will also mean no lack of support from me as your Minister of Finance.

**Guillaume** - So that's what he says. No. And what does it mean? It means no.

**Ehmke** No buses or trains. No post. No hospitals. And no support from Helmut, because - no Helmut!

**Wilke** (*with Brandt*) He's in Washington, Herr Chancellor.

**Brandt** And no word?

**Wilke** He says -just do whatever you think best.

**Brandt** Thank him, will you, Reinhard?

**Ehmke** (*with Guillaume*) So when the employers collapse and 'no' turns out to mean 'yes', who's to blame?

**Guillaume** Willy.

**Ehmke** When the world's oil producers force prices up, and suddenly there's no petrol in the pumps and no cars on the autobahn, who's the guilty party?

**Guillaume** Willy.

**Ehmke** Who made the sun shine for them yesterday?

**Guillaume** Willy.

**Ehmke** So who's making it rain today?

**Guillaume** Willy.

**Ehmke** Who put the leak in their roof and the hole in their shoe?

**Guillaume** Willy. Willy, Willy, Willy.

**Ehmke** He's dropped ten points in the polls. Even the left-wing press have turned against him.

**Kretschmann** - Get him out of there, Günter. Get him on the train again. More upturned faces. More



smiling lips and shining eyes. Make him happy again, Günter!

**Guillaume** (with **Brandt** and **Bauhaus**) Frimmersdorf . . . Koblenz . . . Darmstadt . . . Suit pressed, clean shirt . . . Who's who in Frimmersdorf, what's what in Darmstadt . . . Uli - another bottle . . . ! Sign hanging in the cloakroom of the Bundestag: Members Only. Scrawled across the bottom: Also hats and coats . . . Neumarkt . . . Regensburg . . . Also hats and coats . . . Neumarkt . . . Regensburg . . . Straubing . . . A listener writes to Radio Yerevan: 'Is there life on Mars?' Radio Yerevan replies: 'No, there is no life on Mars, either . . . ' Look at them out there, Chief! All those faces gazing up from the darkness! Two words from you that's all they want! 'Dear friends . . . dear friends . . . !' No? Look at *her*, then! The way her eyes are fixed on you! The softness of her cheeks as she smiles! And those two women further back. And more women, further back still, that you can't quite see. And more again at the next station. So many of them, Chief! So many different roads you could take!

**Brandt** What have I done with my life, Günter? Moved on, moved on. Adapted, adapted. Turned my back on anyone who ever loved me. Forgotten anyone who ever helped me on my way. Shed my skins, one after another, like a snake . . . On and on the stations come. Plattling, Vilshofen, Passau . . . Willy Flamme, Karl Martin, Felix Franke . . . One face after another. One defeat after another. And where do I end up? On a train, travelling from nowhere to nowhere, to no point or purpose, making my confession to Pastor Nobody.

**Guillaume** (with **Kretschmann**) It doesn't work any more, Arno. Not even the train. Then we're back in Bonn . . . and there's another problem. They're tailing Christel.

**Kretschmann** She's certain?

**Guillaume** Certain.

**Kretschmann** You want us to withdraw you?

**Guillaume** Too late, now they're on to us. Everyone will know it's true. A spy in Willy's own office! That really will finish him. And anyway . . .

**Kretschmann** *He'll* know.

**Guillaume** Stupid, isn't it? He's going to know sooner or later. And half of me longs to tell him!

**Kretschmann** But face to face.

**Guillaume** Not just run away, like a naughty little boy.

**Kretschmann** You want to see the look in his eyes as he feels the knife go in.

**Guillaume** I want him to see it was hard for me, as well as for him. Anyway, it may be a false alarm. Christel's up for a job in the Ministry of Defence. Routine check of some sort.

**Kretschmann** Lie low for a bit. Take a holiday. Somewhere in the sun. Some place where the skies are blue all day. Wait and see.

**Genscher** (with **Brandt** and **Nollau**) I understand that Herr Guillaume is out of the office today.

**Brandt** Taking a well-deserved holiday.

**Genscher** The best part of a year has gone by since you authorised Herr Nollau to place him under observation. I have been pressing Herr Nollau to tell me whether we now feel able to present the case for prosecution.

**Brandt** Dear God, I assumed all that was long forgotten. Not that I ever saw the slightest sign of any activity. Your people are very skilled, Herr Nollau.

**Nollau** Thank you, Herr Chancellor.

**Brandt** You have actually found some evidence?

**Nollau** We think so. We believe so. We feel we may have. On the other hand . . .

**Gensch** Yes or no?

**Nollau** Some difficulties and inconsistencies remain. One can imagine defence counsel making much of the second man, for example.

**Gensch** The second man? What second man?

**Nollau** In the original clandestine message on which the case would still largely depend. It referred, if you recall, to a second son.

**Brandt** A second son? Or a second man?

**Nollau** Let me see . . .

**Gensch** Oh, no! Oh, for heaven's sake!

**Nollau** 'Congratulations on the second man.'

**Gensch** The second *man* in the family is the son!

**Nollau** I see. Of course. So the first man is . . . ?

**Brandt** Resting from his labours.

**Guillaume** (*with Kretschmann*) I set off before dawn for the long drive south. I glance in my mirror as I turn out of the petrol station, and there, in the first grey light, is a car waiting on the hard shoulder about three hundred metres behind me. I move off. He moves off. I turn onto the autobahn. He turns onto the autobahn. I hit a steady 120. He stays sitting in my mirror. Across the frontier into Belgium and he's still there. On into France, and he holds 160 with me all the way to Paris. My own personal assistant! As faithful to me as I am to Willy. Then at Fontainebleau the French police take over . . .

**Kretschmann** They let you have your holiday?

**Guillaume** My last holiday. In the south. In the sun.

**Kretschmann** You thought of staying there? Of never coming back?

**Guillaume** Every sunlit hour of every sunlit day. The simple life. A glass of wine on a shaded terrace. The scent of rosemary and thyme. All thought jammed out by the cicadas . . .

**Kretschmann** Your life's work done.

**Guillaume** At peace with the world around me. My own simple self at last. Not even my own self. No one.

**Kretschmann** You could have gone home. Now you knew you were blown. You could have crossed back to the East.

**Guillaume** They gave me the chance. They followed me north as far as Fontainebleau. Then this afternoon nothing. All the way to the border - no one. Petrol in the tank. Money in my pocket.

**Kretschmann** Why didn't you? Pierre?

**Guillaume** Also Christel.

**Kretschmann** And your current lady-friend.

**Guillaume** You. Mischa.

**Kretschmann** Willy, of course.

**Guillaume** Such an ignominious exit. I don't want him to remember me like that.

**Kretschmann** Our last meeting, then?

**Guillaume** Looks like it.

**Kretschmann** Four years, though!

**Guillaume** Not bad.

**Kretschmann** One for the history books, Günter. In the chapter on Willy Brandt you'll always have your paragraph. *Knocking. Darkness. Doorbell. A crack of light.*

**Voice** Herr Günter Guillaume?

**Guillaume** Yes?

**Voice** We have a warrant for your arrest.

**Nollau** (*with Brandt and Guillaume*) Half-past six this morning, Herr Chancellor. At his flat. His wife was also arrested.

**Brandt** And Pierre. Their son. Was he present? Did he see it happen?

**Nollau** I believe he came out of his bedroom while the arrest was being made. I'm pleased to say Guillaume confessed at once.

**Guillaume** I am a citizen of East Germany, and one of its officers. I must ask you to respect that.

**Brandt** A citizen of East Germany. One of its officers . . . He gave you the case. You wouldn't have had one otherwise. He sentenced himself.

**Nollau** I realise that a number of mistakes have been made in the course of this investigation, Herr Chancellor. I hope you feel it has now been pursued to a satisfactory conclusion.

**Brandt** He did it for Pierre. He betrayed me - and then he betrayed his other master as well. To explain to Pierre.

**Nollau** Perhaps also to explain to you, Herr Chancellor.

**Guillaume** (*alone, sits*) Sorry, Arno. The only time I dropped my guard in all the eighteen years I've spent here. The only mistake I made . . . I wonder where *you* are now? Vanished into the mist, I hope . . . Strange - *you* can see *me*. Gazing out at you from every newspaper and television screen in West Germany. You can guess what I'm doing, too. Reporting to you still! Inside my head. Telling you everything! Telling you sorry. Telling you I know I let Mischa down.

**Brandt** (*with Ehmke*) Trust no one. That's the miserable lesson of these last four years.

**Ehmke** Not even me. I hired him. I vetted him. Not even you. For a whole year you've known he was under surveillance. And not a word of warning to me.

**Brandt** What kind of man must he be, though? What kind of people are they who sent him? You're robbed by the beggar you befriend, and you feel ashamed for him. Ashamed for yourself, too, for trusting him.

**Guillaume** - And Willy. I let Willy down. I saw him on the news. He looked sick at heart. His first trip without me to watch over him. Wearing half of one suit and half of another! And no upturned faces! Who wrote his schedule? Who sent him on a walkabout when everyone was at home watching the football?

**Wilke** (*with Ehmke*) All the journalists are complaining. One of them said: 'It was never like this when Günter was organising it.' Meanwhile there's Willy, standing on a clifftop, gazing into the depths below.

**Brandt** - If you're going to fall, where's the better place to land? In the soft swamp of disgrace, to flounder helplessly on? Or on the hard ground, with all your struggles over? One long moment of terror, and then such . . . such simplicity.

**Ehmke** (*with Wilke and Brandt*) Come on, Willy. We can soon fix this. All it needs is for me to go on television and say that at every stage in Guillaume's career the proper vetting and security procedures were followed.

**Wilke** They weren't.

**Ehmke** You're not the one who's going to say it.

**Brandt** If only I hadn't given up smoking.

**Ehmke** So, Willy, your great reshuffle. What are you going to do with Helmut? He wants the Foreign Ministry, and so does Genscher.

**Brandt** Such a shabby way to go. Such an ignominious exit.

**Ehmke** Leave it all to me, Willy. I'll fix it. We'll have you chancelling again in no time.

**Nollau** (*with Bauhaus*) The women? What women?

**Bauhaus** On the train. On his travels.

**Nollau** Oh, I see. I don't think this is in any way relevant to our inquiries, Herr Bauhaus.

**Bauhaus** I'm sorry. I thought I should mention it.

**Nollau** There's no secret about Herr Brandt's weakness in this direction.

**Bauhaus** Anyway, I've given your people the list if you need it . . .

**Nollau** You made a list?

**Bauhaus** Part of my job - check his visitors. I couldn't always get their names. Time in and time out, though. And some kind of rough indication of the different categories. Journalists, party workers, and so on. Local supporters, prostitutes . . .

**Nollau** I don't think we need to pursue this any further, Herr Bauhaus.

**Bauhaus** No, only I just thought, if Herr Guillaume was keeping a list as well . . .

**Nollau** Guillaume? *Guillaume* knew about Herr Brandt's proclivities?

**Bauhaus** When we were on the train. Herr Guillaume had to help me . . . well . . .

**Nollau** Help you what?

**Bauhaus** Control the queue. And I just thought, if he'd given the list to his people in East Berlin . . .

**Nollau** So . . . Journalists, you say? Party workers? What kind of numbers are we talking about . . . ?

**Guillaume** - The women! Suddenly it's the only thing my interrogators are interested in! But everyone knew! Everyone's always known! Why have people suddenly started to talk about it?

**Genscher** (*with Brandt*) I hardly need say that I find this an intensely distasteful task. I knew as soon as Nollau put it in my hands, though, that I had no choice but to show it to you.

**Guillaume** - It wasn't me, Arno! Not a word have I said! Not me, Chief. Not me!

**Genscher** Every single time we sit down to negotiate with them, whatever it's about - trade, refugees, border controls - we'll know they're holding this behind their backs.

**Brandt** Pure nonsense, of course. For the most part. Sadly. Rather flattering, though, for a man of my age.

**Wehner** (*with Schmidt*) We've put a knife in their hands.

**Schmidt** One in *your* hands as well, of course . . .

**Wehner** Not a weapon I should have chosen.

**Schmidt** This list. It's in your handwriting.

**Wehner** Nollau read it aloud to me.

**Schmidt** And you took it down? At dictation? All ten pages?

**Wehner** Old journalist - I write shorthand. I'm sorry it should have happened like this, Helmut. I know how distasteful you find it.

**Schmidt** Every encounter. Every category of woman at every stop along the line. In shorthand.

**Wehner** Helmut, we both always knew he'd have to go in the end. It was only a question of when he became more of a liability than an asset to the party.

**Bauhaus** (*with Brandt*) I'm sorry, Chief. I know you feel I've let you down.

**Brandt** *I'm* sorry. I seem to have given you an inordinate amount of labour.

**Bauhaus** They kept on and on at me! I got confused! I'm an ordinary family man. I was out of my depth. Chief, I've served you faithfully for four years! Day in, day out! Fetched and carried for you! And always ready, at the slightest sudden movement in the corner of my eye, to step between you and the gun!

**Brandt** And all the time there was another Uli there, waiting to emerge from the shadows when the moment came.

**Schmidt** (*with Wehner*) We'll all have to give him our support, of course.

**Wehner** Of course. Our full support.

**Schmidt** You'll make that clear to him?

**Wehner** Don't worry, Helmut. Your hands will be clean. Just as Number One's always were.

**Guillaume** - The Chief knows he can rely on me! He knows we'd never try to undermine him! That's not what we meant at all!

**Wehner** (*with Brandt*) The choice is obviously yours. You could resign the chancellorship, but stay on as party chairman - or you could give up the party as well.

**Brandt** You've seen Nollau's list?

**Wehner** I didn't note the details.

**Brandt** Pity. They would have amused you.

**Wehner** Or you could try to struggle on. Whatever you decide, you know I'll stand behind you.

**Brandt** Where you have always stood.

**Wehner** Precisely where I have always stood.

**Brandt** With Helmut beside you.

**Wehner** And if you do decide to hang on then you can count on us both to support you in exactly the same way as we always have.

**Brandt** It's helpful to know that one has some friends one can rely upon not to change.

**Wehner** Shall I ask Helmut to join us?

**Brandt** So many people, with so many different views and so many different voices. And inside each of us so many more people still, all struggling to be heard. For a moment one voice rises above the others, and everyone picks up the tune. And then the cacophony resumes. Until sooner or later another voice is raised . . .

**Wehner** Helmut! (*With Brandt and Schmidt.*) I think Number One has reached a decision.

**Schmidt** I felt I should wait until you'd made up your own mind. I shouldn't like anyone to think I'd attempted to influence you. Let me merely say that, whatever your decision is . . .

**Brandt** I have your support.

**Schmidt** My unswerving support.

**Brandt** Thank you. I think I can see a way of doing it that would enable me to offer you the Foreign Ministry.

**Schmidt** Offer me the . . . ?

**Brandt** Foreign Ministry. Isn't that what you want? When I reshuffle? Keep Genscher out of it, at any rate. I'm going to make a completely fresh start. Get rid of Grabert. Bring in someone else to run the Chancellor's office.

**Schmidt** I see. You're not . . . ?

**Brandt** Not what?

**Schmidt** I thought . . . Herbert thought . . .

**Wehner** I think even Number One thought.

**Brandt** Thought, yes. Thought and thought. Decided even. But what voice will speak when you open your mouth you never know for certain until it does.

**Schmidt** So . . . Well . . . Of course . . .

**Brandt** Not even *you*.

**Schmidt** No . . . Only . . . Well . . .

**Brandt** Will you fight or will you run? Who knows until the moment comes? And since I have your support. Your unswerving support . . .

**Bauhaus** (*with Nollau*) One other possibility I should mention. Guillaume may also have had well . . . photos.

**Nollau** More photos?

**Bauhaus** He was a professional photographer.

**Nollau** So?

**Bauhaus** When we were on the train he had the compartment adjoining the Chief's . . .

**Wilke** (*with Wehner and Schmidt*) No more than one might expect from the gutter press, of course. I thought you'd better see it, though.

**Wehner** 'Did Brandt Spy Take Sex Photos?'

**Schmidt** Where did this one come from?

**Wehner** No idea.

**Wilke** Have you seen him today? He looks just about at the end of his tether.

**Wehner** Been up all night, I gather. Drinking. Wavering. Muttering about pistols and high cliffs . . .

**Brandt** *joins them. Wilke gives him the newspaper.*

**Wilke** I'm sorry to be the messenger . . .

**Brandt** So many people eager to lend a helping hand.

**Schmidt** But where did they get the story?

**Guillaume** - Not from me, Chief. No story — no photographs! You know that!

**Brandt** *(to Wehner)* I never asked how your meeting went. With your friends in East Berlin on Friday.

**Wehner** Fruitful, I think.

**Brandt** Prisoners and families?

**Wehner** Not this time.

**Brandt** No?

**Wehner** Economic co-operation. Long-planned. As you know.

**Brandt** So much support . . . You open your mouth to surrender, and you hear a voice saying: 'I'm damned if I will!' You open it again, and this time it's another voice altogether. Saying: 'Done for. Finished. Sunk.' Well . . . Various people I shall have to inform first, of course. My family. The party. Our coalition partners. My official letter of resignation Grabert can take to the President this evening. *(To Schmidt.)* I know that Herbert will give you exactly the same kind of support as he has always given me.

**Schmidt** Willy, stop. Stop, stop, stop. Let's all just pause and think for a moment. Let's not get ourselves rushed into a decision we might all regret. Willy . . . !

**Wehner** *(with Schmidt and Wilke)* I shouldn't get too excited. He'll change his mind a few more times yet.

**Schmidt** One of us must go after him, stop him, reason with him!

**Wehner** Don't worry. It's me they'll point the finger at, not you.

**Schmidt** We can't survive without Willy! I'll never carry the party! They love him!

**Wehner** They'll love you, too. In time. If you feed them and keep them warm. If I'm there to be hated. If love is what you want.

**Schmidt** I can't do it, Herbert! Not like this!

**Wehner** He was right about one thing. Fight or run? Pull the trigger or drop the gun? Not one of us who knows which it will be until it's happened.

**Ehmke** *(with Schmidt, Wehner and Wilke)* Where's Willy? I think I may have swung it! Went on television and really did my stuff. Said we'd done all the security checks in the world. Done them ten times over. Lied and lied until I believed it myself . . . Where is he?

**Wehner** Resigning.

**Ehmke** I knew it.

**Wehner** Or not resigning.

**Wilke** *gives Ehmke the newspaper.*

**Wehner** In two minds about it. Making up both of them.

**Ehmke** Someone should go and make sure he's all right.

**Schmidt** You, presumably.

**Ehmke** Strange, isn't it. Everybody loves him - and nobody does he have to turn to. Nobody in the whole wide world.

**Schmidt** He has you.

**Ehmke** Not even me.

**Guillaume** (*alone*) The nobody he turned to once was me. An upturned face like all the others that he spoke to from his heart. The upturned face for ever at his side. The smiling face with nothing behind it. No secret ambitions, no concealed disagreements, no hidden resentments. He didn't like me much. He told Horst Ehmke to get rid of me.

*The expectant murmur of an audience.*

Told him to, but never made him do it.

*Handbell. Silence.*

**Woman's voice** Ladies and gentlemen, I declare the result of the vote to be as follows. Those in favour: 267. Those against: 225.

*Applause. Lights up on Schmidt.*

I therefore declare, according to article 63 paragraph 2 of the Basic Law, that the proposed Member has received the votes of the majority of Members of the Bundestag. Herr Schmidt, I must ask you if you accept election as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

**Guillaume** - His faithful nobody. And just when he needed me most I wasn't there.

**Schmidt** Frau President, I accept the election.

**Guillaume** I think about it all over the years as I serve my long sentence, and I see just how the pieces in the puzzle fall into place. The distrust, the jealousy. The economics, the illness. Schmidt and Wehner. Nollau and Genscher and Bauhaus. Herbert Frahm and Herbert Moller. And finally me. I've let myself be used! Not just by Mischa. Not just by you, Arno. By Herbert Wehner. That's what burns. I've been picked up by Wehner, like a handy lump of wood by a murderer, and used to club Willy down. Not for one moment do I let anyone see my shame. But ashamed I am, Arno! Ashamed at last . . .

**Kretschmann** - Nothing I can do for you now but count the days of your sentence off with you one by one, while we wait for Mischa to get you exchanged. Six years it takes us before we manage to bring you home.

**Guillaume** Home, yes. Only I've got cancer by this time. I've lost all contact with Pierre.

**Kretschmann** (*with Guillaume*) Thirty prisoners we paid for you, Günter! You always wanted to know if it was true about the prisoners. And the price has gone up. They're worth almost a hundred thousand marks a head now. Three million marks we valued you at!

**Guillaume** Home. Is it? I see it with very different eyes now. And how thin that single voice sounds once your ears have got attuned to the complexity of counterpoint! In any case you were right. Now Willy had made peace with the Russians they didn't need to keep their wretched little ally on its feet any longer.

*The faint thudding of a pickaxe.*

(*with everyone*) That knocking in the timbers grows louder and louder as the months and years go by - and it turns out that this is where the noise was coming from all the time. Not that house. The house next door. Our house.



**Brandt** The journalists rang me in the middle of the night to get my reaction. The event we'd waited so long for has actually begun to happen. The state whose existence I recognised is passing out of existence before our eyes. The point of all that suffering and struggle and deception is crumbling into dust.

*The single pickaxe is joined by more. The sound grows louder. Everyone rises and gazes out into the house. The thudding of the pickaxes culminates in the rumble of collapsing masonry. Light. And at last what belongs together is coming together. Our divided self has become one self.*

**Guillaume** The old peacemaker sets out on his travels once again. So many new lands to wander! So many more upturned faces!

**Brandt** Eisenach and Dresden . . . Leipzig and Rostock . . .

**Guillaume** All wanting to see the man who first began to make this happen. Does he ever miss me organising the timetables and laying out his suit? Does he ever consider that I played my own small part in all this? The little man who looked at the great man, and saw that he could be trusted.

**Brandt** I sometimes wonder about him, of course. His son's turned his back on him, his homeland's vanished. We're both mortally ill.

**Guillaume** I watch him as he passes. He's changed. So have I. So has everyone and everything. Herbert Wehner . . .

**Wehner** Dead and with the angels.

**Guillaume** Helmut Schmidt . . .

**Schmidt** Long since out of office.

**Ehmke** And our great party with him.

**Guillaume** Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who could never be Foreign Minister . . .

**Genscher** Foreign Minister for the last fifteen years.

**Guillaume** And where are you, Arno? Vanished again before they arrest you. Melted into the crowd, like so many others.

**Kretschmann** - I stand among them and cheer with all the rest as Willy passes. Cheer with all my heart. A great man!

**Brandt** We're healed and whole. For a little while, at any rate. And for a little while everyone's glad.

**Guillaume** And wherever he goes, my shadow goes with him. Together still.

*Darkness.*

## POSTSCRIPT

Nineteen seventy-two marked the high summer of Willy Brandt's brief but remarkable career as German Chancellor. It was also, as it happened, the year in which I made my first serious visit to Germany, and first became fascinated by it - particularly by its evolution since the Second World War. Perhaps this is why the complex and painful story of Brandt's downfall two years later captured my imagination at the time, and has been lurking at the back of my mind ever since.

Brandt was one of the most attractive public figures of the twentieth century, who won people's trust and love not only in Germany but all over the world. He first became a national and international celebrity in the 1950s, when he was Governing Mayor of West Berlin, and led the city's resistance to the efforts of the Soviet Union to undermine and intimidate it so that it could be absorbed into the East German state surrounding it. After his resignation from the Federal Chancellorship in 1974 he won himself a completely new reputation with yet another career as an internationalist and champion of the Third World. His greatest achievements, though, were in Federal politics. The first of them was to help reform his party, the SPD (the Social Democrats), so as to make it electable by the cautiously conservative German voters. The second was single-handedly to seize the chance, when it was at last offered by a modest improvement in the party's share of the vote in 1969, of forming an SPD-led coalition - the first left-of- centre coalition in Germany, with the first left-of-centre Chancellor, since Hitler had crushed parliamentary democracy in the early thirties. His real triumph, though, was the use to which he put the power he had gained: to secure what had hitherto seemed a politically impossible goal - a reconciliation with Germany's former enemies in Eastern Europe.

The difficulty was that this could be done only by at last recognising the painful realities created by the outcome of the war. One of these was the loss of nearly a quarter of Germany's territory in the East. The other was the existence within the remaining German lands of the second state that had grown out of the Soviet zone of occupation - the German Democratic Republic, alien in its political character, bound hand and foot to the Soviet instead of the Western power bloc, and sealed off behind closed frontiers that sundered all natural family and social connections. There was entrenched and embittered opposition to accepting either fact, particularly from those most directly involved - the 8 million Germans who had been expelled from the former German territories east of the Oder and Neisse rivers, which had now been divided up between the Soviet Union and Poland, plus the 4 million who had fled from East Germany, and the millions more who had relatives still trapped there. But Brandt succeeded in doing it, and succeeded totally. The consequences of this reconciliation reached far beyond Germany. They changed the face of Europe, and of the world, by making possible the gradual scaling down of the Cold War - and thereby, eventually, an event that Brandt never foresaw: the end of the very state whose existence he had recognised, followed by the collapse of the entire Soviet empire.

In the summer of 1972, when I arrived in Germany, Brandt's government was in the middle of this great work. In spite of the severe difficulties it was encountering at home because of its small and steadily vanishing majority in the Bundestag, it was already ratifying the treaties it had negotiated with the Soviet Union and Poland. I can't say that I paid very much attention to these triumphs at the time. Federal politics happened in Bonn, and Germany for me that summer was Berlin, the once-great city I had come to Germany to write about, now only notionally the capital, left marvellous but functionless deep inside East Germany, like a luxury liner that had somehow become beached in the sandy wastes of the Mark Brandenburg.

The city compelled the imagination in all kinds of ways. Its greatest fascination, though, was undoubtedly its greatest monstrosity - the Wall, the hideous concrete barrier, enforced by armed guards and a complex series of lethal mantraps, that the East German government had been forced to erect in 1961 to stop the massive haemorrhage of its citizens to the West. Another much longer wall, from the Baltic to Thuringia, divided the German Democratic Republic from West Germany proper, but the Berlin Wall obtruded more on the consciousness because it closed in the Western half of the city as tightly as the fence round a suburban garden. Wherever you went you came face to face with it barring the street you were in, and defining the geography of Berlin even more sharply

than the Hudson river does the geography of New York.

Somewhere out of sight behind it that summer Egon Bahr and Michael Kohl, the representatives of the Federal and Democratic German Republics respectively, were negotiating the terms of the Basic Treaty by which the West was at last to recognise the East, and by which relations between the two states were at last to be given some semblance of normality. Already a new agreement on Berlin itself, signed by the four former allies, was for the first time making it possible for West Berliners to visit the Eastern half of their city. Friends of mine came back to the modern wonderland of West Berlin stunned by the different kind of wonderland that they had found on the other side of the Wall: cobbled streets, unlit villages, pockmarked tenements, snorting steam trains — the long-lost old Germany of the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich, magically preserved in all its nostalgic dullness and shabbiness, as if in some vast grey heritage park, by the conservatism of the Communists and the backwardness of their economy.

The existence of this other Germany, and the endless puzzle of its relations with the Federal Republic, was part of what made modern German politics the most interesting in Europe. How even to refer to it officially without seeming to acknowledge that it was a separate state? The right-wing press stuck with 'the Soviet Zone', or even simply 'the Zone', long after it had acquired a government of its own. The usual official euphemism was 'the other part of Germany'. Kiesinger, Brandt's predecessor as Chancellor, described it not as a state but a 'phenomenon'. Brandt was prepared to concede that it was a state, but refused to see it as a foreign one. As he famously said, in the statement of his new government's policies in 1969: 'Even if two states exist in Germany they are not foreign to each other; their relations to each other can only be of a special sort.'

Whatever West Germans called it, there were endless practical difficulties in coping with a hostile next-door neighbour that was obsessed with spying on every aspect of life, not only internally but externally - particularly since all its 15 million citizens were potential agents because they spoke exactly the same language - and since a further 4 million of them were inside the gates already. What could such close cousins, who found themselves upon such different paths in life, make of each other? How would they behave as their relationship began to change?

The complexities of the situation were made painfully personal in the story of Willy Brandt and Günter Guillaume. Guillaume, who had crossed over from East Berlin thirteen years earlier, joined the Chancellor's office as a junior aide within weeks of Brandt's election in 1969. For the next four years he served Brandt with devotion and efficiency, and rose to become the personal assistant who organised his travels and accompanied him wherever he went. He was also spying on him, it turned out, with equal devotion and efficiency, on behalf of his employers in the East German Ministry of State Security, and his arrest in 1974 precipitated Brandt's resignation.

Exactly why it did, though, is by no means obvious. In his official letter of resignation Brandt said that he assumed political responsibility for negligence in connection with the affair. The security services had indeed committed a catalogue of errors in failing to vet Guillaume properly before his appointment, and in allowing him to continue even after the first serious suspicions had been raised against him. In private some of Brandt's colleagues told him that he was open to blackmail by the East German government, because Guillaume had presumably supplied them with a list of Brandt's extra-marital activities. But historians tend to agree that the unmasking of Guillaume was more the occasion of the Chancellor's downfall than its cause. It took its place among a complex of factors arising from the political situation inside the Federal Republic, from the internal conflicts of the SPD and its leaders, from Brandt's own character and physical condition - even from the very success that he had achieved.

Peter Merseburger, Brandt's most recent biographer, mocks supporters of Brandt who detect treachery and see his fall as a kind of regicide. 'As if, in the respectable republican court at Bonn there had been Shakespearean dramas, opponents are demonised as Brutus-figures who carried daggers under their robes, even as dark Nibelung warriors who had nothing in mind but to assassinate the Chancellor's character.' Politics, as Merseburger says, is mostly 'terribly banal', and the events of 1974 were no exception. Among the banalities, nevertheless, were many strands of powerful personal feeling, of loyalty and jealousy, of courage and despair. It was really the sheer complexity of this mixture that finally decided me to write the play. Complexity is what the play is about: the complexity of human arrangements and of human beings themselves, and the difficulties that this creates in both shaping and understanding our actions.

The only part of German history that seems to arouse much interest in the British is the Nazi

period. That brutal holiday from the moral restraints under which West European societies normally labour possesses a kind of corrupt glamour for even the most timid and law-abiding. The half-century that has followed Germany's awakening from the sick dream is thought to be a time of dull respectability, with the Federal Republic characterised by nothing much except material prosperity, and formed in the image of the peaceful and provincial Rhineland town which was the seat of its government for most of the period.

To me, I have to say, that material prosperity, that peacefulness, even that supposed dullness, represent an achievement at which I never cease to marvel or to be moved. It's difficult to think of parallels for such an unlikely political, economic and moral resurgence. What other nation, even Japan, has risen so swiftly from beginnings as abject as the physical ruin, moral degradation and political paralysis in which Germany found itself in 1945? Federal Germany began life as a graveyard in which almost every city had been reduced to rubble, and almost every institution and political resource contaminated by complicity in the crimes of National Socialism; yet from this utter desolation, without recourse to despotism or military means, its citizens constructed one of the most prosperous, stable, and decent states in Europe, the cornerstone of a peace which has endured now, at least in Western Europe, for nearly sixty years.

The process was greatly assisted, it's true, by some of the consequences of defeat itself. It was in the first place the presence of the occupying armies that probably saved Germany from the revolutions and counter-revolutions by which it was ravaged after the First World War. Then there were the refugees from the East. By 1950 nearly 8 million of the 12 forced out of the lost provinces of East Prussia and the Sudetenland flooded into the Western zones of occupation. How the shattered country ever absorbed them beggars the imagination. A further 3 million arrived over the years, plus another 4 million from East Germany. This flood of immigrants, though, provided the Federal Republic with the labour it needed to rebuild. Recovery was also helped by Marshall Aid, provided to the Western zones of occupation by America even while the Russians were still pillaging their own zone (though the net value of it, when offset against reparations and occupation costs, has been queried by some historians; and in any case Germany received less of it than Britain and other European countries).

Even the famous currency reform of 1948, which gave birth to the mighty Deutschmark, and which first kicked the moribund economy into life again, was sprung upon Germans not by Ludwig Erhard, their economics minister, as is generally supposed, but by the Americans (and hijacked by Erhard in a spectacular double-double-cross which would provide the material for another play). The currency reform also precipitated the splitting of the nation, because the Soviet Union refused to accept the Deutschmark in its zone of occupation. But this, too, had its positive effects for West Germany, because it marked a further step in the division of the entire world into two competing empires, whose confrontation in the ensuing cold war swiftly transformed America's defeated enemy into its crucial front-line ally.

German politicians were reluctant to endorse the dismemberment of their nation, and the concept of West Germany as a separate political entity seems to have originated once again with the Americans (according to Dean Acheson, it was first proposed by the US Military Governor, General Lucius Clay). The new state even acquired the constitution that has served it so well ever since (more properly called the Basic Law, so as not to imply any constitutional acceptance of the country's division) only because it was instructed by the occupying powers to compose one.

In the end, though, the success of the new state was created by the efforts of its own citizens - by the sheer hard labour of its workers, by the crafts that were lying dormant in people's fingertips and the professional and entrepreneurial skills in their brains, by the readiness of so many people to put the public good at least as high as their own personal profit — and by the political skills of the leaders it found. The Basic Law was signed into effect, and the first Federal election held, in 1949, but there was already a complex political landscape in place: the *Länder*, the patchwork of provinces that make up the German nation (eleven of them at the time), together with their governments. Their heterogeneity reflects the very different characters and histories of the various German states that were assembled to compose Imperial Germany in 1871, and the combination of their individual politics with their participation in the Federal politics of Bonn created the characteristic complexity of modern German politics.

Since that first election in 1949, which brought the wily Konrad Adenauer to power, the Federal government has gone through many crises and scandals. It has survived many revelations that its

members or officers had been implicated in the crimes of the past, or were working for East German intelligence, and many alarms when the nationalistic right seemed to be resurgent, or when the electorate seemed to be still nostalgic for past glories. In the last decade the longed-for reunification with the Eastern *Länder* has plunged the nation into its most severe and prolonged difficulties yet. But the Federal Republic has worked. It has proved stable and moderate. It has even survived its dependence upon coalition as a way of life something which appears unworkable to British and American eyes, which has caused endemic weakness in France and Italy, and which indeed destroyed the Weimar Republic and opened the door to Hitler. Every West German government since the Federal Republic was founded has been a coalition, usually between the CDU/CSU (the conservative alliance formed by the Christian Democratic Union of the northern *Länder* and the Christian Social Union of Bavaria) on the one hand and the tiny FDP, the Free Democratic Party (aka the Liberals) on the other.

In 1966, though, coalition politics reached its bizarre apotheosis in the so-called Grand Coalition, when the junior partner of the CDU/CSU became not the FDP but the SPD, their principal antagonist, hitherto apparently doomed to serve as the permanent Opposition. Willy Brandt was bounced into the arrangement against his wishes by his colleagues Herbert Wehner and Helmut Schmidt, because the plane bringing him from Berlin to the crucial meeting was delayed by fog. But, once again, the arrangement worked. Brandt himself, with his charm, his fluency in other languages, and his impeccable political past, made a natural Foreign Minister. And although he loathed Georg Kiesinger, the CDU Chancellor and a former member of the Nazi Party, to the point where he claimed to feel physically ill in his presence, the coalition lasted for three years, and is regarded by some commentators as one of the most successful governments in the history of the Federal Republic.

The elections in the autumn of 1969 transformed the politics of coalition once again. Although it still trailed the Christian Democrats, the SPD picked up enough seats to raise the possibility of securing a slim majority in the Bundestag by going into coalition with the FDP. Wehner and Schmidt were against it; they wanted to continue with the existing arrangement. With entirely uncharacteristic decisiveness, Brandt seized his chance. Wehner and Schmidt had bounced him into the Grand Coalition; now he bounced them out of it. Without a word to either of them he went on television on election night and announced that he would seek to form a new government with the FDP. He succeeded, and three weeks later the new Bundestag elected him Chancellor.

Which is where my play begins.

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Two mutually contradictory developments had conspired to bring the SPD and the electorate somewhat closer together. The first was the change in the nature of the party that had begun at its conference in Bad Godesberg ten years earlier, when Brandt, Wehner and Schmidt had persuaded it to dump its residual Marxism in favour of the so-called social market economy. The second was the change in the nature of the electorate brought about by the events on the streets of Germany in the previous year.

The 'student movement' of 1968 swept all the way across Europe and the USA. But it had begun the year before in Berlin. The trigger was a demonstration against a visit by the Shah of Persia, and its heavy-handed suppression by the police, during which they shot and killed a student called Benno Ohnesorg. The wave of demonstrations, strikes and sit-ins that ensued all over the world was like the long-stored energy released in an earthquake. It came from a huge idealism that had found little outlet in the cautious compromises of parliamentary democracy. In Germany there were two additional causes of frustration. One was the new generation's realisation that the apparently solid fabric of German society rested upon foundations built out of the rubble of its National Socialist past, and which were by unspoken common consent not to be inspected too closely. The second was the extreme expression of the consensuality of post-war German politics in the Grand Coalition, which left all the functions of an Opposition to the tiny, impotent and far from radical FDP.

So the radical left had constituted itself as an informal 'extra-parliamentary Opposition'. This chaotic grouping was, needless to say, far more disparate than any official coalition could ever be, and it was the spectacular array of its fission products that caught my eye when I arrived in Berlin in 1972. Some of its factions were rigidly subservient to the SED (the 'Socialist Unity Party' that ruled

East Germany), some of them were Maoist, some of them nostalgic throwbacks to the KPD, the old Communist Party of the Weimar years, some of them engaged in increasingly brutal terrorism. A wide range of idealistic lifestyles and business enterprises had sprung up in the city, a kaleidoscope of 'left-oriented' communes, of pubs and cafés selling drinks and hot cakes at 'comrades' prices'.

The movement produced a sympathetic shift to the left among many voters who were never part of it. A number of its most active and effective adherents, in any case, decided to pursue their battle within the framework of practical politics. They proclaimed 'the long march through the institutions', including the unions and the SPD, with the intention of bringing them under their control by constitutional means. All this helped to earn the party the small increase in its vote in 1969 (3.4 per cent) that put it within reach of real power. The pressures it produced inside the party, though, and the expectations that the party's success aroused in its new adherents, created great difficulties for Brandt. It also produced a backlash among voters, particularly since left extremists in the Baader-Meinhof group, now reconstituted as the Red Army Faction, had taken to robbing banks and murdering judges. Brandt's proposal to encourage yet another manifestation of the left by offering concessions to Soviet Communism and by recognising its client regime in East Germany became even more alarming than it had been before. He had to find ways of reassuring people. One attempt was the proclamation of the so-called 'Radicals Edict' of January 1972, more usually known abroad as the *Berufsverbot* (bar to the professions), designed to exclude radicals from teaching and other public services. If Brandt's greatest achievement was the Ostpolitik (and the Deutschlandpolitik, as the part of it relating to *deutsch-deutsche* relations was more properly called), then his greatest mistake - or so he said himself - was this reactionary domestic counterpoise to it.

All politics is necessarily complex, since its essence is the practical resolution of differences of interest and outlook which are in principle irreconcilable. All human beings, too, are complex - but Brandt (like German politics) was perhaps more complex than most. He was certainly more complex than he seemed. In public there was something engagingly open and straightforward about him, even when he was at his most devious - something recognisably decent and human, to which many people in many different parts of the world responded. Even the new leftists were charmed by him. Even the personal assistant who was spying on him. His associates, though, often complained about the weaknesses he showed in private: his indecisiveness, his avoidance of confrontation, his uncommunicativeness, his proneness to depression, and his vanity. He made many conquests, but had few real friends. He extended a personal intimacy to a hall full of people, but not to many individuals taken on their own.

He *did* it, though; he achieved his great goal. This is the most difficult thing of all to understand about him. He performed that one single act that makes its mark upon the world, that defines and validates a life, and that eludes almost everybody. With this play as with an earlier one of mine, *Copenhagen*, the question arises as to how much of it is fact and how much of it fiction. The division there, it seemed to me, was reasonably clear, since the characters were all shades returning from beyond the grave - and in any case almost every aspect of the real event that they were discussing was open to dispute. Even so I found myself being solemnly asked by probing interviewers if audiences might not be misled into thinking they were watching 'the truth'.

This play is open to more reasonable objections. The characters are all shown as being alive, the events in which they are participating as unfolding in the present tense. Very few of the words that these characters speak, however, were ever actually spoken by their real counterparts. What the feelings and ideas of those counterparts were, and whether the feelings and ideas expressed by my characters have anything in common with them, is a matter of interpretation and conjecture. The events themselves, and the world in which they take place, are hugely over-simplified. Any librarian should unhesitatingly file the play under fiction.

But, for anyone who is interested, this fiction does take its rise from the historical record. All the political events referred to are real ones: the trips to Erfurt and Warsaw, the vanishing majority and the no-confidence vote, the triumph in the 1972 election and the gathering difficulties that followed it. The personalities of the protagonists are very much those attributed to their real counterparts by observers and historians. Brandt's drinking and womanising are not in dispute, nor are his 'feverish colds' and his taste for jokes. (Almost all the jokes that Brandt makes in the play are taken from a written collection he assembled).<sup>1</sup> All the circumstances of his childhood that Brandt recalls, and all his adventures when he was operating underground in the 1930s for the Socialist Workers' Party, are taken from his memoirs and the standard biographies. The picture of life in the Palais

Schaumburg, where the Federal Chancellor's office was housed, comes from various recorded accounts. So does that of life aboard the special train (which was indeed built for Reichsmarschall Goring, and which you can see now preserved in the historical museum in Bonn).

Two of the murkier topics touched upon in the play are factual. The first is the bribery that perhaps saved Brandt in the no-confidence vote. The truth about this began to come to light a year later, in the summer of 1973, when a CDU deputy called Julius Steiner confessed to having received 50,000 marks for withholding his vote against Brandt. He claimed that the money had come from Karl Wienand, the business manager of the Parliamentary SPD, who notoriously assisted Herbert Wehner in many of the shadier dealings on behalf of the Party for which Wehner enjoyed taking the credit. The money came from the Stasi, the East German Ministry of State Security.<sup>1</sup> Or so it is claimed in his memoirs by Markus Wolf, the legendary head of the Stasi's foreign intelligence service ('Mischka' to his colleagues, and said to be the model for John le Carre's Karla), and the allegation was accepted by the court that tried him in 1994, though Wienand, for what it's worth, denied it. The name of a second Christian Democrat deputy has since come to light in the Stasi files.

The other topic is the Federal Republic's secret ransoming of the Democratic Republic's political prisoners, and the equally secret payments it made to have people allowed out of East Germany to rejoin their families in the West. The DDR<sup>2</sup> carried on this cynical extortion at arm's length, through an East German lawyer called Wolfgang Vogel. When I stumbled across the trade in 1972 I was begged by officials of Amnesty International not to refer to it in the articles I was writing, for fear of jeopardising it. The income was so vast that it covered something like 20 per cent of the DDR's chronic balance-of-payments deficit in 'inter-German' trade. According to Vogel's own records, between 1964, when the trade started, and 1989, when the Wall came down, the Federal Republic bought out 33,755 prisoners and 215,019 people to be reunited with their families, at a total cost of 3,436 million Deutschmarks.

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The most fictitious-looking aspect of the play is the role played by Günter Guillaume. Once again, though, I have followed the outline of the story fairly closely. His career in the Chancellor's office did begin almost simultaneously with Brandt's own. The doubts that were raised about his background were dismissed much as described in the play. Brandt did repeatedly ask his chief-of-staff Horst Ehmke (and later Günter Grabert, Ehmke's successor) to replace him; but somehow instead he did indeed get promoted from one position to another until, at the start of the 1972 election campaign, he took over as Brandt's personal assistant, with access to his files and in charge of organising the Chancellor's special train. On the train journeys he also accompanied Brandt as his valet, among other things, and was in charge of all his communications with Bonn and the rest of the world.

There are plenty of photographs of him, because he's in a lot of the pictures that were taken of Brandt. He's at the side of the room, or in the background, or walking a few paces behind the Chancellor, his hands folded respectfully behind his back, a dull, cosy, chubby figure in horn-rimmed spectacles and polite smile. He was known for his endless capacity for work and his equally endless good humour. He was always described as *kumpelhaft* (matey), a characteristic that was thought to be typically *berlinisch*. According to *Die Zeit*, he 'never lost the fried food smell of the Berlin *Hinterhof*'. A lot of the journalists around the Chancellor's office seem to have appreciated his easy-going chumminess. Brandt didn't; he found him servile. In some ways he was a kind of dim reflection of Brandt himself, with the same taste for the good life, and the same eye for women. Wibke Bruhns, a brilliant journalist on *Der Stern*, and one of the women with whom Brandt was said to have been involved, wrote memorably of Guillaume that he was 'nothing . . . a servant - not a person but a part of the place. You'd find him there just as you'd find a chair in the room.' Marianne Wichert-Quoirin, a local journalist who had known Guillaume at the time, described him to me as quite visibly the type of man that the DDR sent over - slightly old-fashioned and formal, given to wearing suits and buying flowers for ladies and helping them on with their coats.

His job as Brandt's assistant was a demanding one. The working day ended only when he laid out the last batch of papers on Brandt's night-table, and began again when he collected them first thing next morning, marked up with Brandt's annotations in green pencil. His few hours off each day must have been largely taken up with copying or photographing documents for his other employer. His home life was bleak. Wibke Bruhns caught the anonymity of the apartment where he and his wife Christel lived with her observation that it was furnished with the kind of potted plants that people give

as presents; 'no one likes them, but no one throws them away.' Christel (somewhat too loud, sharp-tongued and rather charmless, according to Bruhns) was also a spy, and had been seen by their employers as the star until Günter had been so unexpectedly catapulted into the Chancellor's office. Their marriage was on the rocks. His only consolations were good lunches and dinners with his controller, an undetermined number of extra-marital liaisons, his teenage son Pierre, and the great secret that he nursed.

Apart from a conviction for drunk driving in 1972, there seems to be only one moment recorded when he showed any sign of the strain that he must have been living under. This was on a trip he made with Brandt in the following year to the South of France. Brandt was informed later, according to his memoirs, that Guillaume had fallen asleep after he had been drinking, and a notebook dropped out of his pocket. When the security men accompanying the Chancellor thoughtfully tried to put it back, Guillaume awoke and mumbled: 'You swine! You won't catch me, though!'

There were evidently more Günter Guillaumes than the two who played out their simultaneous parts in the Palais Schaumburg. When he finally appeared in court, the summer after his arrest, a number of journalists noted the change in his manner and appearance. *Der Spiegel* decided that he had been underestimated. The new Guillaume, said the magazine, was visibly endowed with 'judgement, vitality and willpower'. He radiated, said the magazine, an extraordinarily direct and intense warmth that made his successes with women understandable. And in a long television interview he gave much later, after he had been released from prison and returned to the DDR, he has changed once again. It's difficult to make any connection between the pudgy little man in Bonn and the slim, bearded figure on the television screen, whose alert dryness and sharp tongue suggest the retired senior administrator rather than the willing dogsbody.

All the aspects of the surveillance on Guillaume which seem hardest to credit come from the record. Brandt was indeed informed of the suspicions against his assistant and sworn to silence. He was indeed encouraged to take Guillaume off to Norway with him as his only assistant, because Wilke and his deputy Schilling had holiday arrangements of their own, and Guillaume was indeed allowed to handle all the teleprinter traffic between Norway and Bonn, unchecked and unobserved. Guillaume and his wife did indeed throw a party for all the security staff. Also taken from the record is the even more farcical confusion between 'the second son' and 'the second man', and the belatedness of its resolution.

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About other details I have to sound a note of caution. The ticking of an unseen insect in the rafters of the Palais Schaumburg<sup>1</sup> and various other colourful touches are certainly taken from a published source. But the source in this case is Guillaume's own memoirs - and these have to be treated with a great deal of reserve.

They were ghosted, and first published in 1988 in the DDR - not for sale to the public but 'for official use only' (by the East German security services) - then reissued in the Federal Republic two years later. Markus Wolf, in *his* memoirs (also, of course, to be treated with circumspection), says that Guillaume's book was 'written in part to rub in the embarrassment of the affair to Bonn (after careful combing and adaptation by my service as disinformation - to protect other sources - and as positive PR for our work and its necessity)'.

Guillaume's book is curiously engaging, in spite of (or perhaps because of) its dubious provenance. But, some time between the collapse of the DDR in 1989 and his death in 1995, he gave a long interview to the journalist Guido Knopp, who was preparing a television programme about him, in which he cast even further doubt on it as a source. The ghost, he says, was 'a very nice journalist' supplied by the Stasi, who encouraged him to improve his stories somewhat. One of them, which had always puzzled me, about a meeting Guillaume claimed to have had in the Picasso Museum in Vallauris with 'a high-ranking man' in the intelligence service - presumably Wolf himself - he now disavowed completely. He also confessed to having built up the story of persuading Bauhaus to take the wrong dispatch-box back to Bonn at the end of the holiday in Norway. There were a whole series of boxes, he admitted, not just two, and he hadn't intended any deceit in getting Bauhaus to take one full of left-over souvenirs. I confess in my turn to having kept to Guillaume's first version of the story, for the same reasons as he first told it.

Wolf in his memoirs is rather disparaging about Guillaume and his vanity, and he confesses



frankly that he sees the downfall of Brandt through his agent's activities as 'the greatest defeat we suffered up to that time . . . equivalent to kicking a football into our own goal'. This may go some way to accounting for another discrepancy between Guillaume's book and the later interview. In the book Guillaume speaks about Wolf with the greatest warmth and respect. In the interview his tone has grown much sharper. 'Herr Wolf,' he says, 'shouldn't say things today that were not so. Just because it doesn't suit him in retrospect to accept responsibility. He was very quick to excuse himself before God and the world.'

Guillaume's attitude to his other employer, too, has become a little more critical. In the book he speaks of him with nothing but admiration (and his attitude was remarked upon at the time by Bruhns and others). Now he says that Brandt was not always easy to work with. He would much rather have been personal assistant to Helmut Schmidt, whom he regards as the Federal Republic's greatest Chancellor.

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I have in any case exercised a good deal of licence in other directions, though I think this is in most cases fairly obvious. The continuous contact that my Guillaume has with his controller is plainly a dramatisation of their discrete monthly meetings. The conversations that Guillaume has with Brandt on the train go much further in this direction. In his memoirs Guillaume says that Brandt became another man on his travels: 'Other cities, other faces, other thoughts, other problems - he discovered a new impetus towards them. Suddenly he seemed free and relaxed . . . He became talkative, excited by every good joke . . . En route he tanked up, and I made it my business to give him as much chance as possible to do it.' When there were no election trips in prospect, Guillaume invented the excuse of 'information journeys' instead. He alleges that on their travels together Brandt sometimes called him '*du*' and he felt obliged to return the compliment. Nowhere, though, does he claim that Brandt ever carried this intimacy as far as conversations about his childhood or his personal feelings.

I have extended my licence even further in the case of the holiday in Norway. The two families *were* together, and they did have a certain amount of social contact. The story of the relaxed mushrooming with Bauhaus, and of the games that Matthias and Pierre played together in the woods, come from Guillaume's memoirs. He says he was convinced that Brandt had long since suppressed the memory of the allegations against him - probably because he simply didn't want to spoil the holiday. In the interview with Knopp, however, a rather different picture emerges. Guillaume says that Brandt was unusually silent with him in Norway, partly because they both felt constrained by the presence of their families. (Christel seems to have done most of the talking when they were all together.) It is in any case unlikely that Brandt had forgotten the allegations. Klaus Harpprecht, Brandt's speechwriter, told Knopp that Brandt had made an effort of his own before they left Bonn to get evidence against Guillaume. He had 'touchingly' left threads on his desk overnight, and carefully arranged files and pencils; 'he'd probably read about this in novels when he was a boy.' His attempts in the play to sound Guillaume out while they are in Norway by telling him about his own involvement in underground activities before the war are my purely invented equivalent to the threads and pencils (though what Brandt recalls from those years is based very closely on what he says himself in his memoirs).

I can only say that fact has subsequently outstripped any fiction of mine in sheer implausibility. Brandt's son Matthias, who is said to have played so happily in the Norwegian woods with Guillaume's son Pierre, is now an actor. A German television company has recently produced a dramatised reconstruction of the case, and Matthias has entered the story once again. Playing the part of Günter Guillaume.

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Further licence with the narrative: I have made the emergence of the Ostpolitik seem rather more clear-cut than it was. Brandt had already been pursuing a policy of *rapprochement* with the East as Foreign Minister in the Grand Coalition. The desirability of improving relations with the Soviet Union and its allies was a matter of general agreement; the stumbling-block was the precondition for this - acceptance of the Oder-Neisse frontier and recognition of the DDR. What Brandt says on the subject in the early stages of Act One is based closely upon various speeches he made, but I'm not aware of

any occasion where he articulated it as completely as he does here, or where he laid quite as much emphasis on it in a general context. In later years he saw the Ostpolitik as his life's work, and historians agree that it was the core programme and real achievement of his government. But he knew only too well how sensitive the subject was with a large proportion of the voters, and in his declaration of the new government's policy that followed the 1969 election he gave more prominence to security, continuity and internal reform ('daring more democracy' - a famous phrase said to have been contributed by Günter Grass). There are certain parallels, one might think today, with the British government's handling of entry into the European single currency.

No one knows exactly what Brandt, Wehner and Schmidt said to each other the night before the Chancellor's decision to resign, and it notoriously happened not in Bonn but at a party conference in the resort of Münster-Eifel; the name has become part of SPD mythology, like Erfurt (where in 1891 the party adopted Marxism), and Bad Godesberg (where in 1959 it abandoned it). I have also shifted some actions from offstage characters to onstage ones. According to Guillaume's memoirs it was not Ehmke who gave Guillaume his promotion to be Peter Reuschenbach's replacement but Reuschenbach himself. Then again, Bauhaus didn't volunteer his information about Guillaume's knowledge of Brandt's womanising to Nollau personally but to his interrogators. The general absence of police and security men from the play is symptomatic of the staff shortages imposed by the economics of drama (both literal and metaphorical). Reed politics is a labour-intensive business, and the Bundestag should have been teeming with deputies, the Palais Schaumburg with Ministers, advisers and civil servants - not to mention Germany as a whole with Germans.

For similar reasons I have sacked even a number of the principal protagonists in the story. The dismissal I regret most is that of Egon Bahr. Bahr was Brandt's closest confidant, a former radio journalist who had become his press representative back in the Berlin days. He was Brandt's trusted representative in the gruelling process of negotiating all the Eastern treaties (fifty meetings with the Russians alone). Brandt joked that Bahr didn't even know where France was, but he had a fascination with power politics and a natural bent for secret negotiation. Guillaume called him 'the sly fox', others 'Tricky Egon' (in English, presumably by analogy with the Tricky Dicky who was forced out of the White House three months after Brandt was out of the Palais Schaumburg).

He was an engaging and somewhat eccentric figure, who began his career as a pianist, but who was unable to pursue it in the Nazi period because one of his grandmothers was Jewish. In his retirement he took up one of the oddest hobbies I've ever heard of - travelling around the world with his wife as the only passengers aboard container ships, from one grim depot to another. When Wehner stood up in front of the party leadership after Brandt's resignation and talked about his love for Brandt's person and politics, Bahr put his hands over his face and wept. (Though it has to be said that this was on camera, and Karl Wienand remarked coldly that he'd seen Bahr weep before.) The dramatic problem is that, while he was away negotiating, his role in Bonn was more or less duplicated by Brandt's other confidant, Horst Ehmke, who coaxed Brandt out of his depressions (and got sidelined for his pains), and who as Brandt's chief of staff was much more closely involved in the events surrounding Guillaume.

Also missing is another confidant of Brandt's, the publisher Klaus Harpprecht, whom Brandt brought into his second government as a speechwriter, and whose diary supplies a lot of the atmosphere in the Palais Schaumburg during those last eighteen months. I also wish I could have found a way of introducing a most remarkable man who made a marginal appearance earlier in *Copenhagen* - Georg Duckwitz. In the 1940s, as the shipping specialist in the German Embassy in Copenhagen, he had warned the Danes exactly when the SS were to begin their round-up of the Jews, which enabled almost all of them to be saved. After the war he went back to Copenhagen as German Ambassador, and was greatly honoured by the Danes, before finishing his career as head of the Eastern Department in the Foreign Office. Brandt was a personal friend, and when he was still Foreign Minister in the Grand Coalition brought him back from retirement, then as Chancellor moved him to his personal staff to work on the Ostpolitik.

The oddest economy of all, one may think, is the exclusion of the entire female sex — particularly since it was Brandt's relations with women that undid him. German parliamentary politics at the time, though, was a man's world; the story of Brandt's government might have been rather different if it hadn't been so closed off from normal demographic reality. There were a few women in the Bundestag (and by the time Helmut Schmidt took office one of them was President of it), but only one in the Cabinet. In general, though, as was often noted, the only women whom German

politicians saw during the course of the working week in Bonn were wives, secretaries and journalists, and there are no women at all who are recorded as playing any significant role in the arguments and struggles that form the background to the play.

Two remarkable women stand on the fringes of it, though, and there are other plays to be written about both of them. One of them is Brandt's wife, Rut. He had been married before during his time in Norway, and he married for a third time in his late sixties. But for almost the whole of his career his partner was Rut. She was a Norwegian who had been involved in distributing material for the Resistance during the German occupation, and he met her in Stockholm in 1943. She was as attractive and charming as her husband, the kind of wife that every traditional male politician must dream of having at his side, and she behaved with great dignity, generosity and humour throughout their trials in 1974, and in their later divorce. The account she gives in her memoirs of her escape as a girl from occupied Norway, through the mountains into Sweden, is compelling; so is her description of the devastation and misery that she found in Berlin when she arrived with Willy at the end of the war. By 1974 their marriage seems to have been reduced more or less to a social arrangement, and during the crisis she says that when Brandt was at home he went around 'like a stranger in the house'. He subsequently blamed her (along with Wehner) for his resignation, because she had agreed with him that he should take responsibility for the situation, and had made no attempt to dissuade him.

The other remarkable woman is Guillaume's wife, Christel. She might have been created as Rut's antithesis cold, charmless and unapproachable. She was thought by the journalists who met her to be much more intelligent than her husband, and for a long time it was she who had the starring role as a spy, because she had managed to get a job in the Chancellery of Hesse, in Wiesbaden. She must have had to make a painful readjustment when Guillaume leapfrogged over her into the Federal Chancellery and she was ordered to act as his courier - though by the time they were both unmasked she seemed to be about to recover some of the lost ground by getting a job in the Ministry of Defence.

**At no point, though, did she have much control over her own destiny.** She was not consulted about the Stasi's plan to send her with her husband to the West - merely informed about it and told to keep quiet and co-operate - while her mother, who had Dutch nationality, was used as the lever for getting permission for the three of them to settle in the Federal Republic. She put on a great performance of marital solidarity at their trial, because, she said much later, she didn't want to appear weak. But the marriage had long been dead, and kept in being only because the Stasi required them to be a married couple. Many years later, after the collapse of the DDR, she gave a long and desolating television interview. Her life, she said, had been a series of uprootings. She had been taken out of her own country and dumped in the West to live a life of fiction. Then dumped in prison, where she served over five years of the eight to which she was sentenced, during which time she lost contact with her son Pierre (another victim who could step forward to claim a play about his own story). Then she was dumped back in the DDR, and, as soon as her husband was also exchanged and arrived to join her six months later, dumped by him. Then dumped again, by the collapse of the DDR, in yet another new and alien society. At the end of the interview she sat in silence for some moments, thinking back over it all. '*Ein verflushtes Leben*,' she said eventually 'a botched life'.

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There is a third, more shadowy, woman missing from the play: Nora Kretschmann, the wife of Guillaume's controller. But then my Arno Kretschmann himself is a simplification of reality. At the beginning of his career in the Federal Chancellery, Guillaume had other controllers whom he does not name. In his interview with Guido Knopp, Guillaume says that Kretschmann took over at the time of the election campaign in the autumn of 1972. In his memoirs, though, Guillaume dates his arrival a year earlier, and gives so many circumstantial details that I suspect this version is more likely to be the correct one. Although Kretschmann was younger than him they seem to have hit it off immediately. They had lunch together at their first meeting and found themselves enjoying 'a conversation about God and the world as completely unconstrained as any two men who wanted to spend a stimulating afternoon with beer foam under their noses'. After this he remained controller until the Guillaugues were arrested.

It was proposed for a start that their meetings should take place in a secluded boat-house, but

this meant that Guillaume would have to take up sailing, which he thought would be found to sort oddly with his known aversion to sporting activities, and in the end they agreed to meet quite openly in and around Bonn. So openly, in fact, that Kretschmann would occasionally come to the Chancellery and have Guillaume summoned on the house phone. But usually they met in restaurants and bars, often for convivial evenings with their wives present. Guillaume says that Christel and Nora got on well together, and if this is true then these occasions must have been one of the brighter spots in his wife's bleak life.

The Kretschmanns had been fictionalised long before I got near them. They were a married couple, names unknown, who had been sent separately to the West, as 'Franz Tondera' and 'Sieglinde Fichte', and they had begun by establishing separate and very different cover stories. According to Guillaume in his memoirs, Franz travelled for a well-known firm in the motor industry (he doesn't say which), while Sieglinde, having given up her training as a vet in the DDR, worked on a factory production line with Turkish and Greek women guest-workers. They were then directed to make each other's acquaintance by chance on a ski-ing course, fall in love, conduct a bashful courtship and get married all over again. So now Sieglinde Fichte of Ulm, otherwise Ursula Behr of Stuttgart, was Sieglinde Tondera of Cologne. Except that the Tonderas for some reason became Arno and Nora Kretschmann (their given names were extracted, according to the *Spiegel*, from a rearrangement of letters in 'Tondera'.) When the Guillamaues were arrested, the Kretschmanns, in all their shifting avatars, vanished, and even the most diligent searches since the collapse of the DDR in the files of the Stasi, the source of so many revelations about so many people, have so far uncovered no trace of them.

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A number of other questions about the case remain unanswered. Exactly what information, for a start, did Guillaume pass on? He preferred to report to his controller orally, and his information - certainly before the election campaign of 1972, when he first had access to documents came by his own account chiefly from office gossip. Files and notes, Brandt is reported to have said when he gave evidence at the Guillamaues' trial,<sup>1</sup> were much less important than the insights he could have got from informal functions. Various journalists covering the case filled in the likely circumstances.

**Lunch with a Minister President, coffee with a city mayor** — on such occasions not every word is carefully weighed. What relations do leading politicians have to one another . . . ? When, for example, after a session at a Party conference, Schmidt, Wehner, and Brandt visited a *Weinstube* and went on talking - Guillaume would be at the next table . . . In the car after long sessions of the Party Executive, when Brandt gave vent to 'expressions of displeasure', or 'characterised' somebody . . . When the SPD chiefs talked over a cup of coffee or - at the end of the day - over something stronger, about who was going to be renominated or not and where . . . He could catch the nuances of what was said, and hear confidential briefings to journalists on matters that might later make the headlines. He knew much more than any state secret - he knew about the moods, connections, and developments that could lead to the decisions taken later.

As Bahr said in evidence: 'He was always there, but people weren't aware of him.' Wilke recalled him as always wanting to be in on everything, whether it concerned him or not. Guillaume himself said in his interview with Knopp that he couldn't remember what he'd passed on, but agreed that it included everything he could lay his hands on about the negotiations with Moscow and East Berlin. Stephan Konopatzky, a researcher working on the Stasi files now held in a massive archive in Berlin, can find relatively little information credited to XV/19142/60 and XV/11694/60, aka Hansen and Heinze, aka Günter and Christel Guillaume, and less still that was regarded as of any great value. He concedes that Guillaume's reports may, because of their importance and sensitivity, have been handled by some special channel as yet unexplored in the archive, but thinks it more likely that he was being used very cautiously to protect his unique position. When one thinks of all those monthly debriefings by Arno aka Franz, though . . . What happened to everything that was said? Was it the supportive Arno who thought it wasn't worth passing on?

If Wolf is telling the truth in his memoirs he must have received much more material than the files reveal. He says that before Brandt's visit to Erfurt in March 1970 - i.e., even at the very beginning of Guillaume's employment in the Chancellor's office, when he was still concerned with nothing more than trade union liaison - he 'gained access to some of the West German plans, which, combined with information from other sources, gave us a clearer idea of Brandt's intentions and fears'. He also

says that Guillaume's 'real importance for us in East Berlin lay in his political instincts. Through Guillaume's judgements we were able to conclude sooner rather than later that Brandt's new Ostpolitik, while still riven with contradictions, marked a genuine change of course in West German foreign policy. As such, his work actually aided détente by giving us the confidence to place our trust in the intentions of Brandt and his allies.'

There is a further striking discrepancy between the files and Wolfs account. The files contain nothing about Brandt's extra-marital affairs. In his memoirs, though, Wolf claims to know that 'Guillaume soon realised that Brandt's adultery was frequent and varied'. Then again, after Guillaume was unmasked, and the head of the Federal Criminal Police wrote his report on Brandt's private life, cataloguing what Wolf calls 'his affairs with journalists, casual acquaintances, and prostitutes', he claims that 'Guillaume had of course been telling us about this kind of behavior all along'. So perhaps the surviving files don't record the whole story.

The range of material on which the court case was based was narrow. The charge brought against the Guillaumes was the most serious possible: (*schwerer Landesverrat* - high treason. It would have been impossible to secure a conviction on this merely for passing on gossip and unspecified overheard remarks - or even documents, if no one knew what the documents were. So the case depended largely upon Guillaume's spontaneous admission at the moment of his arrest to being an 'officer' of the DDR, and also upon the only specific documents that he was known for certain to have handled - the teleprinter traffic on the Norwegian holiday.

There remains some doubt, however, as to whether any of this material ever reached East Berlin. In his memoirs Guillaume says that he didn't attempt to contact his controller during the holiday, but gives a very graphic and circumstantial account of how he arranged for the copies of all the documents in his possession to be photographed by a courier while he was making an overnight stop at a hotel in Sweden on the way back to Bonn. In the interview with Knopp, as we have seen, he withdraws his claim to have deliberately fooled Bauhaus into thinking that he was carrying the documents himself, but doesn't modify any other part of the story. All this is cast into doubt by Markus Wolfs memoirs, however. Wolf says that the copies were handed over by Christel to a courier called Anita at the Casselsruhe restaurant in Bonn, and that Anita, realising she was being followed, threw them into the Rhine. So he never received them, though he kept this fact from Guillaume so as not to hurt his pride. Konopatzky agrees that there is no trace of any of the Norwegian messages in the files.

Oddly, though, Wolf makes no reference at all to Guillaume's version of the handover, by way of the courier in the Swedish hotel. Even more oddly, perhaps, he recounts in some detail the contents of the three most important messages that Guillaume copied, but doesn't explain where the information came from; not from the Guillaumes' trial, plainly, where the evidence relating to this was given in camera. More oddly still, in a television interview with Guido Knopp for his programme on Guillaume, he says that the documents in the dispatch-box *did* reach East Berlin, though he refuses to say what happened to them.

The story of Christel's meeting at the Casselsruhe restaurant, incidentally, is recounted in Guillaume's book. As in Wolfs version, her lunch companion realised she was being kept under observation, and found herself being tailed when she left the restaurant. Guillaume, who calls the woman not Anita but Thomin, purports to be much amused by his interrogators' suspicion later that she had been a courier. She thought, he says, that the watchers were private detectives employed by her husband because she was having an affair.

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There are a number of other points of dispute in the record, where I have had to choose one version or another. According to Brandt's notes on the case (see the list of Brandt's writings), his bodyguard Ulrich Bauhaus came to him 'with tears in his eyes' and assured him that he had given his interrogators information about Brandt's women only under pressure; he was astonished at how much had already been collected. In a television interview much later, however, Karl Wienand says that Bauhaus went voluntarily to offer his evidence, because he and the other security people, as ordinary citizens in bowler hats and umbrellas, were genuinely shocked by the Chancellor's behaviour. Neither Wienand's record nor his appearance incline one to place much confidence in anything he says, but *someone* must have first brought up the question of the women, and of

Guillaume's awareness of them, and I have followed Wienand's version.

I have also given expression to some of the many conspiracy theories that have been aired. Most of them have centred on the role played by Herbert Wehner, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Party of the SPD and its *eminence grise*. There is general agreement that Wehner was a Machiavellian figure, and relations between him and Brandt had always been difficult; even during the Grand Coalition they had been reduced to communicating through an intermediary. Brandt's single-handed 'cavalry charge' to the Chancellorship in 1969 was perhaps, among other things, a declaration of independence from Wehner, and in no way improved Wehner's low assessment of Brandt's suitability for the job. He thought Brandt a lightweight. The publisher Rudolf Augstein once overheard him saying that Brandt and Walter Scheel (the Foreign Minister and leader of the FDP, therefore Brandt's coalition partner - another central character missing from the play) were both gigolos - *6Sie können nicht regieren, sondern erigieren* ('Their forte is not so much government as erection'). Wehner went to quite extraordinary lengths to undermine Brandt during his second term, and to prepare the way for Helmut Schmidt to succeed him. But, only a few weeks before Brandt's resignation, when Schmidt at last made an open bid for the Chancellorship, Wehner seems to have had a sudden belated realisation of how much he needed Brandt's appeal to both voters and party members, and the two men had a bizarre *rapprochement* (which I reluctantly cut out of the play as one complication too many) - a long meeting at Brandt's home, with many pauses for thoughtful silence and the consumption of red wine, conspiring together against Schmidt.

This odd turn of events, however, did nothing to allay the suspicions of both Brandt and the press later that Wehner had played some kind of underhand role in the Chancellor's resignation. The version in the press was that Wehner had conspired in one way or another with his protégé, Günther Nollau, the President of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (the counter-espionage service). It was suggested that in 1973 Nollau had informed Wehner of the suspicions against Guillaume before he told Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the Minister of the Interior, to whom he was formally responsible. Nollau always vehemently denied this. He insisted that he had told Genscher on 29 May, and Wehner not until 4 June. He remembered the latter date very clearly, he said, because it was his own birthday. Genscher, however, seems a little sceptical of this in his memoirs. 'What did worry me,' he says, 'was that Nollau kept Wehner informed of the investigation. What would Wehner do with this knowledge, since as everyone knew, he was increasingly critical of Willy Brandt's chancellorship?' Arnulf Baring, the standard historian of the period, is inclined to agree. Nollau's forewarning of Wehner, which might have been on 23 May, the very day that the file landed on Nollau's desk, he finds 'exceedingly likely'.

Genscher didn't like Nollau, and blamed him afterwards for telling untruths about the amount of information he had passed on about the case. His behaviour, he said, 'confirmed many of the prejudices raised against him previously'. Brandt didn't like him, either, and refers to him sarcastically in his memoirs as 'supposedly able'. Nollau certainly pursued the case with remarkable ineptitude and desuetude, if nothing worse. His appearance in subsequent television interviews inclines one to share all the prejudices and suspicions that were expressed against him; just as well, you feel, as with Wienand, that he was not in the second-hand car trade, or he might not have got as far as he did.

Guillaume also came to believe that there was a conspiracy - but in his version Wehner, Nollau and Genscher were all in it together. Nollau, he is reported to have said in the evidence he gave when his old employer Markus Wolf was in his turn tried for treason in 1933,<sup>1</sup> was the confidant of Genscher as well as of Wehner, and both of them wanted to force Brandt out. 'Nollau held out the knife, and Genscher gave Brandt the necessary push to make him run on to it.' He himself, he said, in a slightly different version of the metaphor, had been used as the club with which Brandt had been struck.

Brandt himself was obsessed with suspicions of a rather different conspiracy against him - between Herbert Wehner and the East German leadership. He recorded them in a series of cryptic notes, written at some point after his retirement but not published until 1994, and held to them for the rest of his life. They centred on Wehner's known contacts in East Berlin. Wehner reported to Brandt two meetings there. The first was with Erich Honecker, the East German party leader, and its purpose, according to Wehner, was to relaunch the secret trade in political prisoners and family reunions, which had ironically been brought to an end by the regularisation of relations between the two states in the newly signed Basic Treaty. The second was with Wolfgang Vogel, the middleman in

this trade, though the subject in this case was said by Wehner to be economic collaboration in general. The timing of both meetings was unsettling — the first on the evening of 29 May 1973, the day that Nollau told Genscher, and Genscher told Brandt, about the suspicions against Guillaume, and the second on 3 May 1974, the day that Nollau told Wehner about the list of Brandt's women. In any case Brandt believed that Wehner had had additional contacts with East Berlin which had gone unreported. In the course of them, he suspected, Wehner had been told that Guillaume was a spy, and had also been primed to launch his extraordinary attack on him from Moscow in the autumn of 1973.

Brandt's information was provided by Egon Bahr, who had obtained it from the Russians. It had come by way of the secret system of communication that Bahr had established with the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, in imitation of the 'back-channels' used by Henry Kissinger to negotiate with the Soviet Union. The historian August H. Leugers-Scherzberg has recently cast more light on this dark corridor, and the allegations against Wehner that it was used to convey. What neither Bahr nor Brandt realised, says Dr Scherzberg, is that the chain of communication led through Yuri Andropov, later Brezhnev's successor, but at that time head of the KGB. Andropov had reasons to want Wehner discredited in Brandt's eyes, because Wehner distrusted the 'back-channel', and wanted to replace it with a more direct link, while Andropov himself naturally wished to preserve it as an instrument for his own influence. Wehner also dissented from Brandt's belief that an understanding with the Soviet Union was the key that would unlock relations with East Germany, and wanted to distribute the Federal Republic's efforts at reconciliation more broadly around Eastern Europe.

Whatever Wehner did or didn't do behind the scenes, however, his assurance of support for Brandt at the crucial moment in Münsteifel seems to have been less than wholehearted, and Brandt always held him responsible (together with Rut) for failing to dissuade him from a decision that he never ceased to regret.

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I've had much help with this project. First of all (once again) from Sarah Haffner, who got me off on the right foot as soon as I told her what I had in mind, by recommending me to read Arnulf Baring's *Machtwechsel*, and who subsequently supplied me with further parcels of books and help in translating a number of particularly awkward phrases. Peter Merseburger, the political journalist, who was working in Bonn during the Brandt Chancellorship and whose own biography of Brandt has since appeared, gave me a great deal of patient advice. He also introduced me to Klaus Harpprecht, Brandt's speechwriter, and asked his old colleague Fritz Pleitgen to open the film archives of Westdeutscher Rundfunk in Cologne for me.

Eva Giesel, a colleague of my German play agent Ursula Pegler, spent much time, energy and ingenuity making contacts and inquiries on my behalf. I originally expected the play to lay more emphasis on the Guillaumes' trial, and Frau Giesel worked particularly hard at putting me in touch with officials of the court where it took place, the Oberlandesgericht in Dusseldorf. My thanks, too, to Herr Bundesanwalt Lampe, in the office of the Generalbundesanwalt in Karlsruhe, who explained some of the basics of German law to me, and to Professor Peter Brandt, Willy Brandt's eldest son, who most kindly offered to see me, though in the end I decided it might inhibit me; to Frau Gertrud Lenz in the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Bad Godesberg, where the Brandt papers are lodged; to Fritz Pleitgen at WDR; to ZDF for the text of Guido Knopp's interview with Guillaume; to Frau Marianne Wichert-Quoirin, who covered Federal politics in Bonn and the Guillaume trial in Dusseldorf for the *Kölnischer Stadt-Anzeiger*, and to Finn Aaserud for the Norwegianian.

The amount of material available turned out to be oceanic, and for the first time in my life, when I finally had to recognise that I was drowning, I got the help of a research assistant. My choice - Stefan Kroner, the dramaturg who had worked on one of the German productions of *Copenhagen* - turned out to be inspired. He was not only unbelievably quick and industrious, but had an uncanny ability to guess what I should find useful. He plunged into the archive of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, and of WDR in Cologne, and reduced the tons of press-cuttings and weeks of newsreel to proportions I could just about manage. He found books long out of print, and trawled information from the huge deposits of old Stasi files in Berlin (still not fully explored, and a rich potential source of fossil fuel). We also had a delightful trip around the Rhineland together, to see where it all happened and to visit the various archives.

For anyone interested in finding out more about the case itself, or the personalities and politics of the period, the following is a short list of the more easily available material:

### General

Baring, Arnulf: *Machtwechsel, die Ära Brandt-Scheel* (1983, 1998). The standard history of the period. Long (nearly a thousand pages), but boldly and incisively written. The chapters on the Guillaume affair and Brandt's resignation are relatively brief and particularly fine.

Harpprecht, Klaus: *Im Kanzleramt: Tagebuch der Jahre mit Willy Brandt* (2000). Harpprecht is a well-known publisher who joined Brandt's office at the beginning of 1973 as a speech-writer and adviser. He was also a personal friend of Brandt's, and provided him with a holiday house in the South of France which gave him some respite from the political storms of that difficult year. His diary of life in the Palais Schaumburg is sharp, worldly and observant - and a salutary corrective to the schematic oversimplification of my picture.

Rehlinger, Ludwig A.: *Freikauf* (1991). For the rate of ransom per prisoner charged by the DDR.

Whitney, Craig R.: *Advocatus Diaboli: Wolfgang Vogel-Anwalt zwischen Ost und West* (1993). For the complete figures of the trade in prisoners and family reunions, as given in Vogel's own files.

### Brandt's own writings

Brandt, Willy: *Erinnerungen* (1989). The 1994 edition also contains the *Notizen zum Fall G*, the notes about the Guillaume affair that he made around the time of his resignation. There is an English edition, *My Life in Politics* (1992), but it doesn't include the *Notizen*.

A complete collection of Brandt's works is in the course of publication (the *Berliner Ausgabe*). The volume relating to the domestic and social policy of his government is Volume 7, *Mehr Demokratie wagen: Innen- und Gesellschaftspolitik 1966-1974* (2001). The volume relating to his government's foreign policy (including relations with East Germany) is Volume 6, *Ein Volk derguten Nachbarn, Außen- und Deutschlandpolitik 1966—1974*. This has not yet appeared, however, and for his speeches and other statements on foreign policy I have used:

Brandt, Willy: *Reden und Interviews 1968-1969* (German government publication, undated), and *Bundeskanzler Brandt: Reden und Interviews* (1971).

Brandt, Willy: *Lachen hilft - Politische Witze* (2001). A collection of jokes, mostly but not exclusively political, assembled by Brandt over the course of the years. It was completed and published after his death by his widow, Brigitte Seebacher-Brandt. This is the source of most of Brandt's jokes in the play.

### Biographies of Brandt

Merseburger, Peter: *Willy Brandt 1913-1992, Visionar und Realist* (2002). The most recent. Well-written and comprehensive, unashamedly partisan, with a foreword that gives a particularly brilliant overview of Brandt's achievements.

Koch, Peter: *Willy Brandt* (1998). Colourful, journalistic, gossipy, and highly readable.

Marshall, Barbara: *Willy Brandt, a Political Biography*. In English. Short but to the point.

Schöllgen, Gregor: *Willy Brandt - die Biographie* (2001). Compact and serviceable.

### Guillaume

Guillaume, Günter: *Die Aussage*. The original edition, described as *cprotokolliert von Günter Karau* 'was published by the East German military publishing-house in 1988 for the benefit of the security organs and the National People's Army, marked 'Tor official use only''. In 1990 it was reissued in West Germany in a revised form, as *Die Aussage - wie es wirklich war* ('The Testimony - how it really was'; the implication is presumably that the book is a substitute for the testimony which Guillaume refused to give at his trial). For the reserve with which this source should be treated see above. It should really be read in conjunction with:

Knopp, Guido: *Top Spione* (1997), and the TV programme that this was published in association with (ZDF 1994); or, better still, the transcript of the interview conducted with Guillaume by Knopp and Steinhauser that was obtained for me from ZDF (TV2) by Stefan Kroner, though this seems not



to have been published. It appears to be the full text of a conversation from which only excerpts have been used in the programme itself, though it has no date or other indication of its provenance. The assessment of Guillaume's reports as it appears in the files of the Stasi comes from a contribution by Stephan Konopatzky to a conference on the role of the Stasi in the West, in November 2001, organised under the auspices of the organisation that now holds the archive, the office of *Die Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR* (the Federal Commissioners for the Documents of the State Security Service of the Former DDR).

### **Other characters in the story**

Wolf, Markus (with Anna McElvoy): *Man Without a Face* (1997). His memoirs, in English. Very lively and absorbing, and apparently frank about many things, though reserving the right to silence on others.

Genscher, Hans-Dietrich: *Erinnerungen* (1995). Memoirs. In English as *Rebuilding a House Divided* (1995).

Brandt, Rut: *Freundesland* (1992). Her memoirs, and as engaging as Frau Brandt herself.

Schmidt, Helmut: *Weggedrhten* (1996). Memoirs.

Leugers-Scherzberg, August H.: *Die Wandlungen des Herbert Wehner, von der Volksfront zur Großen Koalition* (2002). This is the standard biography of Herbert Wehner, but it takes him only as far as the Grand Coalition. Until the next volume appears:

Leugers-Scherzberg, August H.: *Herbert Wehner und der Rücktritt Willy Brandts am 7. Mai 1974* (in the *Vierteljahresshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, Part 2, April 2002).

Nollau, Günther: *Das Amt* (1982) Memoirs. Relevant extracts in *Der Stern* (11 September 1975).

Ehmke, Horst: *Mittendrin* (1994). Memoirs.

Bahr, Egon: *Zu meiner Zeit* (1996). Memoirs.

1 For the reference to this and all other books mentioned in the Postscript, see the list of sources on page 129.

1 More properly the MfS, the Ministerium für Staatssicherheit, which was responsible for both internal surveillance and for the foreign intelligence service. The latter, the HVA, the Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung (Chief Reconnaissance Directive), was the arm controlling Guillaume.

2 Often known in English as the GDR, but this seems as awkward to me as it would be if in German the USA became the VSA.

1 Guillaume calls it a woodworm, but I'm informed by experts on infestation that if it knocked or ticked it must have been a death-watch beetle.

1 Any account of the case has to rely heavily upon press reports (often remarkably divergent) because in German law there is no such thing as an official transcript of the proceedings, only a summary of the evidence made by the court as part of its judgement.

1 Wolf was convicted, but two years later the judgement was overturned by the Federal Constitutional Court, which ruled that former officers of the DDR intelligence service could not be prosecuted for treason and espionage. Whether he was at all grateful for this expression of the rule of law, or even amused by the irony of it, in the Federal Germany of which he now found himself a citizen, and which he had worked so hard and so skilfully to undermine, he does not say in his memoirs. Brandt, incidentally, was one of the people who had spoken out against his prosecution in the first place.